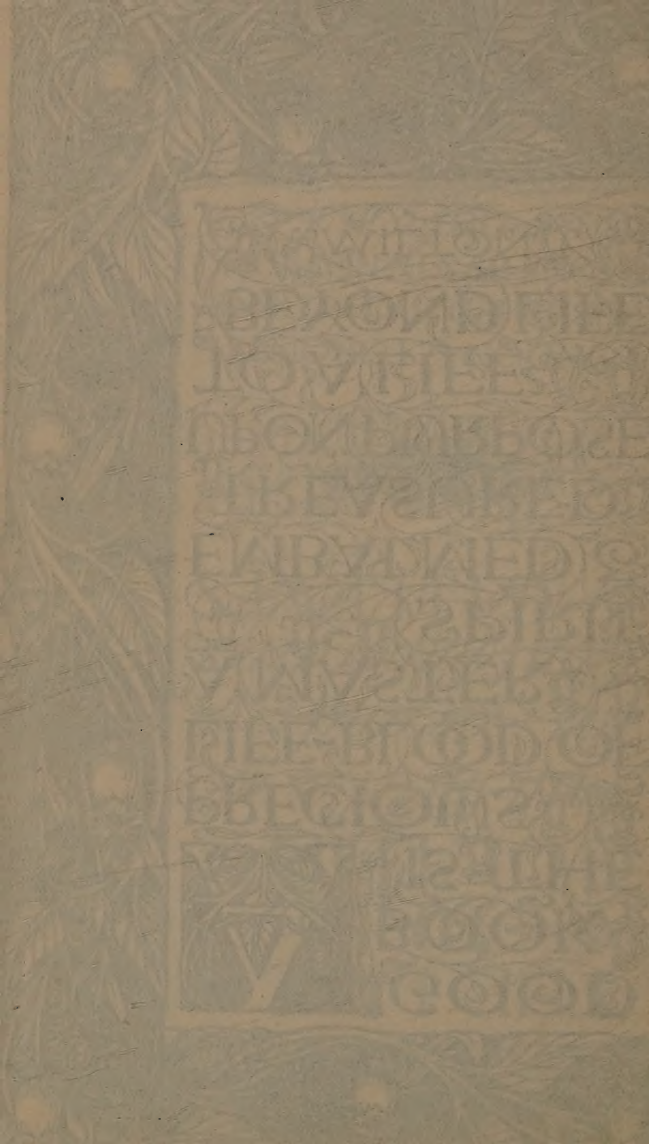

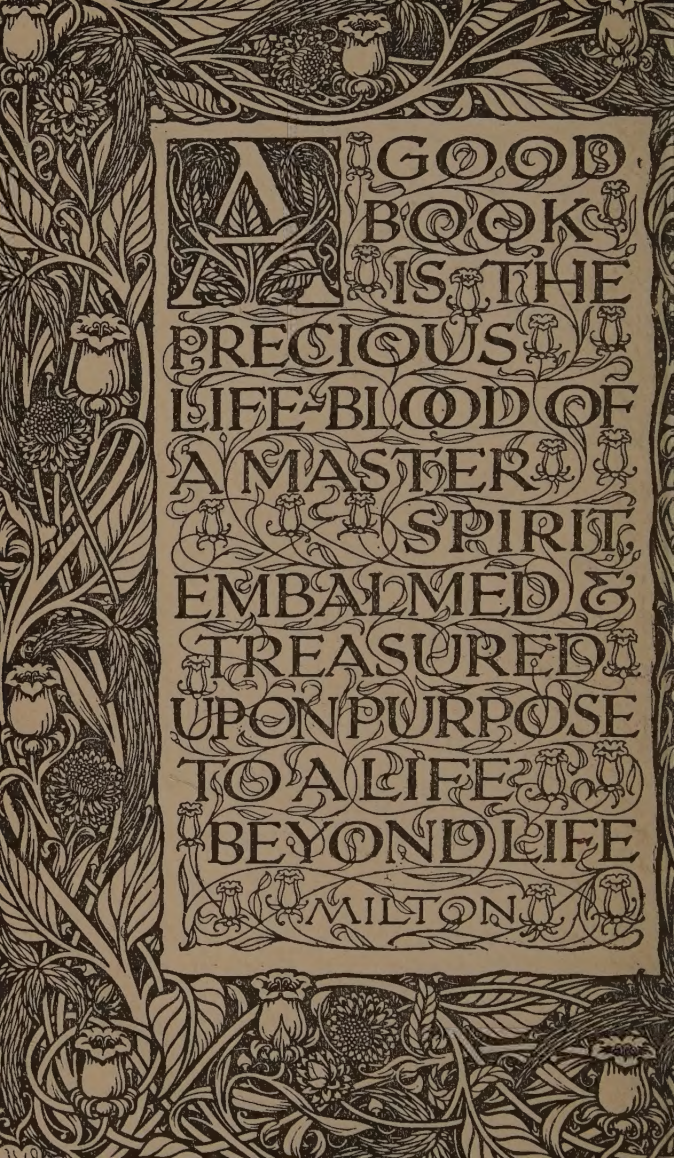
A GOOD BOOK IS THE PRECIOUS LIFE-BLOOD OF A MASTER SPIRIT EMBALMED & TREASURED UPON PURPOSE TO A LIFE BEYOND LIFE
MILTON

THE LIFE & WORKS of GOETHE

With Sketches of his Age and Contemporaries

by G·H·LEWES

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INTRODUCTION

WES'S *Life of Goethe* was almost the first to be written, and in entials it is still perhaps the best. For a long time it was the ular biography even in Germany, where now, however, it has n superseded by Bielschowsky's *Goethe*, a valuable work unbtedly, though written by a less skilful hand. Many years , when I wished to become acquainted with the facts of ethe's life, I rejected Lewes's biography, with that exaggerated r we always feel in youth of following an old-fashioned authority, l selected Düntzer's. I was wrong. Düntzer possessed indeed the merits of scholarship; his detail, his impartiality, his ere devotion to facts, are admirable and have not been surssed, but his work is not, and never professed to be, a broad nming up of a great and many-sided personality. To-day I uld recommend those who desire to have, within the covers of volume, the main facts of Goethe's life, the statement of his ievements, and the means of estimating his place in the world, elect Lewes. Certainly there are some irrelevant and digresc passages in this book, but in the abridged edition which wes himself made in 1873, under the title of *The Story of thе's Life*, far too much was cut out. It is better to study the nplete work, as finally revised by the author, and here, by the nd judgment of the editor and publishers of *Everyman's Library*, sented to the reader in a single compact and beautiful volume.[1] Lewes completed his *Life* at Weimar in 1855, but he had nned it some years earlier, when such a work still had the shness of a new task and an original exploration. He was gularly well equipped for the work. Born in London in 1817, remote Welsh descent, and grandson of a notable actor, he received a many-sided education, largely in France and rmany. At one time he studied medicine, but his inability to ure the spectacle of suffering caused him to abandon all idea becoming a doctor; at a much later period in life, however, he erted to the study of physiology, became a pioneer in modern

[1] I recommend the reader, even if his knowledge of German is but slight, ave by his side in reading this biography Hartleben's *Goethe-Brevier*, a ction of some of the most intimately personal of Goethe's poems (includ- a few usually excluded from collected editions), chronologically arranged, date and occasion of composition being stated in the headlines. It is an luable commentary on the biographical narrative.

biological speculation, and made various valuable physiolo suggestions. He had an inherited passion for the drama, w plays, as well as dramatic criticism, and sometimes himself a The bent of his literary tastes led him to sympathise with qualities of French rather than of German literature, but fro early period he admired Goethe as well as Lessing. He bec also a novelist, and attained in this field a certain measur success. In philosophy he was always interested, having in planned a philosophical treatise before he was twenty. His achievement here was his well-known *Biographical Histor Philosophy*, published in 1845, not indeed a profound work, brilliant and stimulating. A few years later he planned the *of Goethe*. It was an important epoch in his own life. He married some time earlier, but the marriage was unfortu There were wrongs on both sides, and in 1854 he left his fa though still working hard to support wife and children, and jo George Eliot. On taking this memorable step the pair wer live in Germany, studying Goethe in the places he had m famous, and here, in George Eliot's company, Lewes compl the *Life*, certainly one of the most admirable biographies in English language. He died in 1878.

A part of the charm and the value of Lewes's biography li his nearness to its object. He was old enough to have ta with Goethe; he actually talked and corresponded with many had known him intimately, and in this and other ways he acq much original information and saw many unpublished let His nearness also enabled him to view Goethe without that which distance and the reverence of several generations now surrounded him with; there is nothing of the abject worshipper about Lewes, and (although his opinions by no m always carry conviction) he discusses, criticises, even conde when he thinks it necessary. He wrote for a world which knew little about Goethe, and cherished many antipathetic judices; this gave him a freedom of which he fully availed him that is the source of much of the freshness and vivacity o work. There was another and even more important sens which Lewes was near to Goethe. He was not a man of ge but with his very various talents and aptitudes he had the tem ment of genius. In his own smaller way he had encountered same problems of art and thought and life as Goethe had ha wrestle with. Goethe was a dilettante—that is to say, a lov all things—on a more than heroic scale; Lewes was somethi the same on a lower plane. He was an artist and a ma science, a thinker and a man of the world. It was an invalu

nbination of qualities for approaching a personality of Goethe's
nense scope ; none of his successors have possessed a similar
ellent qualification, certainly not Düntzer, the dry and precise
olar, nor Bielschowsky, an invalided school-teacher, pensioned
government, who spent his life in Berlin. Lewes's position in
ition to his subject gave him a freedom and independence, a
ity and balance of judgment, which we can scarcely expect
n the ordinary "Goethe-investigator."

t is impossible, indeed, that Lewes's presentation of particular
ects of Goethe's life and activity should be equal at every point
hat reached by those who have written special monographs
his field. If, for instance, we read Felicie Ewart's book on
ethe's father, we obtain a more complete, interesting, and
npathetic picture of the Frankfurt town-councillor than Lewes,
even Goethe himself, has given us. Professor Herford again,
is Taylorian lecture on Goethe's Italian journey, presents that
nificant epoch in Goethe's life in a more lucid, orderly, and
nprehensive way than Lewes, with whom, however, he is by
means in conflict. When, again, Lewes, following Goethe's
nusiastic friends, describes him as in personal appearance "a
ng Apollo," he is no doubt right in the main, but when we
l Stahl's *Wie sah Goethe aus?* we learn that deductions are
e made from that description. To give one more instance,
es's chapter on Goethe as a man of science is admirable ; but
cannot expect that he should give us so wonderful a picture
Goethe's scientific activities as has lately been presented in
the als Naturforscher, by Professor Rudolf Magnus, who has
followed Goethe step by step. But in all essentials Lewes's
clusions remain well balanced and reliable.

Whatever Lewes's skill and judgment as a biographer, however,
doubt may still arise whether the activity of Goethe-students
ng the past thirty years has not revealed much that ought to
a place in every good biography, and much also that is
y to invalidate conclusions founded on imperfect knowledge.
t is a reasonable suspicion. I have, therefore, systematically
pared Lewes's and Bielschowsky's works, chapter by chapter,
rder to ascertain what new light the latter casts on the former.
le Bielschowsky, whose work is on a larger scale, inevitably
s more information, new and old, both about Goethe and his
ds, it can scarcely be said that at any crucial point he over-
ws Lewes's presentment of the matter, or even that he reveals
existence of any misleading personal bias in his predecessor.
es with insistent iteration seeks indeed to show that Goethe's
biography, written in old age, is inaccurate ; Bielschowsky is

convinced of its accuracy in every detail. But as Lewes consid
that the inaccuracy is mainly that of tone, it is not clear that
divergence of opinion is radical. Again, German critics h
been inclined to resent Lewes's rather slighting attitude towa
German culture generally, an attitude, however, which he sha
with one of the greatest of Germans, Nietzsche. Yet Le
emphasises the Germanic culture with which Goethe became
pregnated at Strasburg; while Bielschowsky, on his side, adn
that "Goethe's Germanic nature is more apparent to foreign
than to his fellow-countrymen." Lewes, in telling how Goe
received his licentiate at the University, wonders how or wh
he obtained his doctor's degree; Bielschowsky knows that
licentiate was counted, even officially, as equivalent to the deg
The point is typical of many that are due to the growth of kn
ledge, but they are quite unimportant.

Of greater interest is the contribution to Goethe's biogra
furnished by the publication of his letters to Behrisch, the fri
of his student days at Leipzic. Lewes's account of Goet
relations with Käthchen Schönkopf (Annette) is at some po
vague; we do not clearly understand how the rupture ca
about, and, misled by Goethe's own way of stating the mat
Lewes attributed the parting entirely to Annette. In the let
in which Goethe himself describes the incidents and emotion
that time, day by day, to Behrisch, a vivid and detailed pag
added to his biography. But it is no more than a page,
Lewes's narrative even of this episode requires little re-writing.

Lewes and Bielschowsky are not altogether in agreem
regarding the two women who had the largest part in Goet
life, Frau von Stein and Christiane Vulpius, who finally bec
his wife. In Lewes's eyes Frau von Stein was a charming
clever coquette, completely mistress of herself, and delibera
playing with Goethe. This is not the opinion of Bielschow
who considers that she genuinely loved him from an early pe
and comprehended his complex nature, though her character
circumstances long held her back from him. Bielschowsky se
herein to be supported by the evidence. But in his depreci
of Christiane, and his tendency to minimise Goethe's love for
he seems to be simply following a German tradition. In Gerr
it has required a pioneer like Hirth (in his recent *Weg zur L*
to do justice to Christiane and the large place which—with
ner faults and defects—she held in Goethe's life; but the s
standpoint had been taken by Lewes half-a-century ea
Bielschowsky will not even grant—though he admits this is

opinion—that the *Roman Elegies* were mainly inspired by ristiane.

There is one important respect in which Bielschowsky has a stinct advantage over Lewes. Although Lewes decisively re-gnises that Goethe's work was mainly autobiographical in its spiration, much of the detailed evidence of this was not in his nds. Bielschowsky shows that Goethe's writings were auto-ographical throughout, and that when not so they were either poor quality or remained mere fragments. Lewes can see no rsonal elements in *Clavigo* or *Stella*, but Bielschowsky points t, doubtless correctly, that in the first Marie is based on ederika, and Carlos corresponds in part to Merck — which counts for Merck's dislike of the piece—while in *Stella* Fernando Goethe with his more virile elements omitted, Stella is an exact rtrait of Lili, and Cecilia is Frederika, who reappears again and ain in his books, and has her final apotheosis at the conclusion of *ust.* Lewes has a poor opinion of *Stella*, and the conclusion nich greatly puzzled Goethe himself) is undoubtedly bad, yet vertheless, as Schrempf has lately pointed out, *Stella* has an portant place in Goethe's treatment of the problems of love. *Tasso* Goethe himself is the poet, Frau von Stein is the ncess, and Karl August is Alfonso. In *Hermann and Dorothea* ethe blended together 1775 and 1795; it is founded on the troubles t befell Lili and her husband at the later date, when they had to from the French Terrorists into Germany, and at the same time ethe learnt the high regard and affection which Lili still cherished him; in Hermann and his parents he pictured himself and his rents. In the *Westöstliche Divan* Suleika is known with cer-nty to be the young actress and dancer, Frau Marianne Willemer, o at that time stirred Goethe's still youthful emotions.

Yet, however imperfect Lewes's knowledge was at these and ilar points, he clearly realised that the study of Goethe's tings is an essential part of the study of Goethe's life. Even greatest and most memorable of his books, *Wilhelm Meister* d *Faust*,—instinctively, and sometimes, it would seem, almost un-sciously,—are great autobiographical transcripts written from ferent sides of the same life. It is the chief value of such a ok as this of Lewes's that it gives us the clue to the inter-etration of Goethe's biography with Goethe's writings. In so ng it helps us to understand a life which is, beyond all others, of instruction and inspiration for those who face the complex blems of the modern world.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

The following are the works published by Lewes:—'Biograph
History of Philosophy,' 2 volumes, 1845–1846, 1857, 1867, 1
1880, Lubbock's 'Hundred Best Books,' 1891; The Spa
Drama, 'Lope de Vega and Calderon' (from the *For*
Quarterly), 1846; 'Ranthorpe' (a Novel), 1847; 'Rose, Blan
and Violet' (a Novel), 1848; 'The Noble Heart' (Drama), 18
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at Ilfracombe, Tenby, the Scilly Isles, and Jersey,' 1858, 18
'Physiology of Common Life,' 2 volumes, 1859–1860; 'Studie
Animal Life, 1862; 'Aristotle, a chapter from the History
Sciences, including an Analysis of Aristotle's Scientific Writin
1864; 'Problems of Life and Mind,' 5 volumes, 1874–18
'Female Characters of Goethe,' Explanatory Text to Kaulba
Drawings, 2nd edition, 1874; 'On Actors and the Art of Acti
1875; 'Dramatic Essays,' reprinted from the *Examiner*,
Introduction and Notes by W. Archer and R. W. Lowe, 18
'The Principles of Success in Literature,' edited with No
T. S. Knowlson (Scott Library), 1898. Lewes also contrib
Articles to the *Westminster*, 1840–1842; to the *British and For*
Review, 1842; *Foreign Quarterly*, 1843; *Edinburgh*, 1843–18
British and Foreign Quarterly, 1843, 1844; *New Quarterly*, 18
Classical Museum, 1844; *British Quarterly*, 1847, 1849; *Fra*
1848; *Leader* (of which Journal Lewes was Joint-Editor
T. Leigh Hunt), 1852. From 1865 to the close of 1866 Lewes
Editor of the *Fortnightly;* some of his articles on the Dra
republished 1875, appeared first in the *Pall Mall Gazette;* L
Sully, *New Quarterly*, October 1879.

TO

THOMAS CARLYLE

WHO FIRST TAUGHT ENGLAND TO APPRECIATE GOETHE

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED AS A MEMORIAL

OF ESTEEM FOR RARE AND

NOBLE QUALITIES

PREFACE

IERE was, perhaps, some temerity in attempting a *Life of* oethe at a time when no German author had undertaken e task; but the reception which my work has met with, en after the appearance of the biographies by Viehoff and häfer, is a justification of the temerity. The sale of thirteen ousand copies in England and Germany, and the sympathy nerously expressed, not unmingled, it is true, with adverse d even angry criticism, are assurances that my labours were t wholly misdirected, however far they may have fallen ort of their aim. For the expressions of sympathy, public d private, I cannot but be grateful; and I have done my st to profit by criticism even when it was most hostile.

I wish to make special mention of the assistance tendered e by the late Mr. Franz Demmler. Although a stranger to e, this accomplished student of Goethe kindly volunteered, id many and pressing avocations, to re-read my book with e express purpose of annotating it; and he sent me several eets of notes and objections, all displaying the vigour of mind and the variety of his reading. Some of these I was d to use; and even those which I could not agree with or opt, were always carefully considered. On certain points r opinions were diametrically opposed; but it was always an vantage to me to read criticisms so frank and acute.

The present edition is altered in form and in substance. has been rewritten in parts, with a view not only of introcing all the new material which several important publicans have furnished, but also of correcting and reconstructing o as to make it more worthy of public favour. As there is le probability of any subsequent publication bringing to nt fresh material of importance, I hope that this reconuction of my book will be final.

With respect to the use I have made of the material hand, especially of Goethe's *Autobiography*, I can but re what was said in the Preface to the First Edition: *Dichtung und Wahrheit* not only wants the egotistic rurality and detail which give such confessions their va but presents great difficulties to a biographer. The m reason of this is the abiding inaccuracy of *tone*, which, more misleading than the many inaccuracies of *fact*, g to the whole youthful period, as narrated by him, an as so directly contrary to what is given by contemporary dence, especially his own letters, that an attempt to recon the contradiction is futile. If any one doubts this, and pers in his doubts after reading the first volume of this work, him take up Goethe's Letters to the Countess von Stolb or the recently published letters to Kestner and Charlo and compare their tone with the tone of the Autobiogra wherein the old man depicts the youth as the old man him, not as the youth felt and lived. The picture of youth follies and youthful passions comes softened through distant avenues of years. The turbulence of a youth genius is not indeed quite forgotten, but it is hinted v stately reserve. Jupiter serenely throned upon Olym forgets that he was once a rebel with the Titans.

When we come to know the real facts, we see that Autobiography does not so much misstate as understate; who can "read between the lines," perceive that it errs m from want of sharpness of relief and percision of detail t from positive misrepresentation. Controlled by contempor evidence, it furnishes one great source for the story of early years; and I greatly regret there is not more conte porary evidence to furnish more details.

For the later period, besides the mass of printed testim in shape of Letters, Memoirs, Reminiscences, &c., I h endeavoured to get at the truth by consulting those who li under the same roof with him, those who lived in frien intercourse with him, and those who have made his life a

ork a special duty. I have sought to acquire and to repro-
uce a definite image of the living man, and not simply of the
an as he appeared in all the reticences of print. For this
urpose I have controlled and completed the testimonies of
rint by means of papers which have never seen the light, and
apers which in all probability never will see the light—by
eans of personal corroboration, and the many slight details
hich are gathered from far and wide when one is alive
every scrap of authentic information and can see its
gnificance; and thus comparing testimony with testimony,
mpleting what was learned yesterday by something learned
-day, not unfrequently helped to one passage by details
rnished from half-a-dozen quarters, I have formed the
nclusions which appear in this work. In this difficult, and
metimes delicate task, I hope it will be apparent that I have
en guided by the desire to get at the truth, having no cause
serve, no partisanship to mislead me, no personal connection
trammel my judgment. It will be seen that I neither
ny, nor attempt to slur over, points which may tell against
y hero. The man is too great and too good to forfeit our
ve, because on some points he may incur blame.

Considerable space has been allotted to analyses and
ticisms of Goethe's works; just as in the life of a great
ptain, much space is necessarily occupied by his campaigns.
these analyses I have tried to be of service to the student
German literature, as well as to those who do not read
rman; and throughout it will be seen that pains have not
en spared to make the reader feel at home in this foreign
d.

The scientific writings have been treated with what pro-
tionately may seem great length; and this, partly because
ence filled a large portion of Goethe's life; partly, because,
n in Germany, there was nothing like a full exposition of
aims and achievements in this direction.

he Priory, North Bank, Regent's Park.
NOVEMBER 1863.

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THE LIFE OF GOETHE

BOOK THE FIRST

1749 TO 1765

Vom Vater hab' ich die Statur,
Des Lebens ernstes Führen;
Von Mütterchen die Frohnatur,
Die Lust zu fabuliren.

Hätte Gott mich anders gewollt,
So hätt' er mich anders gebaut.

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE

ıINTUS CURTIUS tells us that, in certain seasons, Bactria s darkened by whirlwinds of dust, which completely vered and concealed the roads. Left thus without their ıal landmarks, the wanderers awaited the rising of the rs,—

"To light them on their dim and perilous way."

ıy we not say the same of Literature? From time to time pathways are so obscured beneath the rubbish of the age, t many a footsore pilgrim seeks in vain the hidden route. such times let us imitate the Bactrians: let us cease to k upon the confusions of the day, and turning our gaze on the great Immortals who have gone before, seek guidance m their light. In all ages the biographies of great men ve been fruitful in lessons. In all ages they have been verful stimulants to a noble ambition. In all ages they ve been regarded as armouries wherein are gathered the apons with which great battles have been won.

There may be some among my readers who will dispute ethe's claim to greatness. They will admit that he was reat poet, but deny that he was a great man. In denying hey will set forth the qualities which constitute their ideal

of greatness, and finding him deficient in some of th qualities, will dispute his claim. But in awarding him t title, I do not mean to imply that he was an ideal man; I not present him as the exemplar of all greatness. No m can be such an exemplar. Humanity reveals itself in fr ments. One man is the exponent of one kind of excellen another of another. Achilles wins the victory, and Hom immortalises it: we bestow the laurel crown on both. virtue of a genius such as modern times have only se equalled once or twice, Goethe deserves the epithet of gre unless we believe a great genius can belong to a sm nature. Nor is it in virtue of genius alone that he deser the title. Merck said of him that what he lived was m beautiful than what he wrote; and his Life, amid all weaknesses and all its errors, presents a picture of a cert grandeur of soul, which cannot be contemplated unmov I shall make no attempt to conceal his faults. Let them dealt with as harshly as severest justice may dictate, they v not eclipse the central light which shines throughout life. But although I neither wish to excuse, nor to conc faults which he assuredly had, we must always bear in mi that the faults of a celebrated man are apt to carry an unc emphasis. They are thrown into stronger relief by the v splendour of his fame. Had Goethe never written *Faust* one would have heard that he was an inconstant lover, c tepid politician. His glory immortalises his shame.

Let us begin as near the beginning as may be desirable, glancing at his ancestry. That he had inherited his organi tion and tendencies from his forefathers, and could c nothing in himself original, he has told us in these verses:

"Vom Vater hab' ich die Statur,
Des Lebens ernstes Führen;
Von Mütterchen die Frohnatur,
Die Lust zu fabuliren.
Urahnherr war der Schönsten hold,
Das spukt so hin und wieder;
Urahnfrau liebte Schmuck und Gold,
Das zuckt wohl durch die Glieder.
Sind nun die Elemente nicht,
Aus dem Complex zu trennen,
Was ist denn an dem ganzen Wicht
Original zu nennen?"[1]

[1] "From my father I inherit my frame, and the steady guidance of life; f dear little mother my happy disposition, and love of story-telling. My anc was a 'ladies' man,' and that habit haunts me now and then; my ances

The first glimpse we get of his ancestry carries us back about the middle of the seventeenth century. In the afschaft of Mansfeld, in Thuringia, the little town of Artern mbered among its scanty inhabitants a farrier, by name ns Christian Goethe. His son, Frederick, being probably a more meditative turn, selected a more meditative employ- nt than that of shoeing horses: he became a tailor. Having sed an apprenticeship (not precisely that of *Wilhelm ister*), he commenced his Wanderings, in the course of ich he reached Frankfurt. Here he soon found employ- nt, and being, as we learn, "a ladies' man," he soon also nd a wife. The master tailor, Sebastian Lutz, gave him daughter, on his admission to the citizenship of Frankfurt l to the guild of tailors. This was in 1687. Several ldren were born, and vanished; in 1700 his wife, too, ished, to be replaced, five years afterwards, by Frau rnelia Schellhorn, the daughter of another tailor, Georg lter; she was then a widow, blooming with six-and-thirty nmers, and possessing the solid attractions of a good perty, namely, the hotel *Zum Weidenhof*, where her new band laid down the scissors, and donned the landlord's on. He had two sons by her, and died in 1730, aged enty-three.

)f these two sons, the younger, Johann Caspar, was the er of our poet. Thus we see that Goethe, like Schiller, ng from the people. He makes no mention of the lucky or, nor of the Thuringian farrier, in his autobiography. s silence may be variously interpreted. At first, I imagined as aristocratic prudery on the part of *von* Goethe, minister nobleman; but it is never well to put ungenerous con- ctions, when others, equally plausible and more honour- , are ready; let us rather follow the advice of Arthur ps, to "employ our *imagination* in the service of charity." can easily imagine that Goethe was silent about the

finery and show, which also runs in the blood. If, then, the elements ot to be separated from the whole, what can one call original in the ndant?"

is is a very inadequate translation; but believing that to leave German nslated is unfair to those whose want of leisure or inclination has nted their acquiring the language, I shall throughout translate every cited. At the same time it is unfair to the poet, and to the writer ng the poet, to be forced to give translations which are after all felt *not* present the force and spirit of the original. I will do my best to give *ximative* translations, which the reader will be good enough to accept ch, rather than be left in the dark.

tailor, because, in truth, having never known him, there v none of that affectionate remembrance which encircles i objects of early life, to make this grandfather figure in autobiography beside the grandfather Textor, who *was* kno and loved. Probably, also, the tailor was seldom talked in the parental circle. There is a peculiar and indeli ridicule attached to the idea of a tailor in Germany, wh often prevents people of much humbler pretensions th Goethe, from whispering their connection with such a tra Goethe does mention this grandfather in the Second Book his *Autobiography*, and tells us how he was teased by the tau of boys respecting his humble parentage; these taunts e went so far as to imply that he might possibly have H several grandfathers; and he began to speculate on possibility of some latent aristocracy in his descent. T made him examine with some curiosity the portraits of nob men, to try and detect a likeness.

Johann Caspar Goethe received a good education, travel into Italy, became an imperial councillor in Frankfurt, a married, in 1748, Katharina Elizabeth, daughter of Joha Wolfgang Textor, the chief magistrate (*Schultheiss*).[1]

The genealogical tables of kings and conquerors are thou of interest, and why should not the genealogy of our poet equally interesting to us? In the belief that it will be I here subjoin it.

Goethe's father was a cold, stern, formal, somewhat pedan but truth-loving upright-minded man. He hungered for kn ledge; and, although in general of a laconic turn, freely parted all he learned. In his domestic circle his word law. Not only imperious, but in some respects capricio he was nevertheless greatly respected, if little loved, by w children, and friends. He is characterised by Krause as *geradliniger Frankfurter Reichsbürger*—"a formal Frank citizen," whose habits were as measured as his gait.[2] Fr

[1] The family of Textor and Weber exist to this day, and under both na in the Hohenlohe territory. Karl Julius Weber, the humorous autho "Democritus" and of the "Briefe eines in Deutschland reisenden Deutsch was a member of it. In the description of the *Jubilæum* of the Nürn University of Altorf, in 1723, mention is made of one Joannes Guolfga Textor as a bygone ornament of the faculty of law; and Mr. Demmle whom I am indebted for these particulars, suggests the probability of this b the same John Wolfgang, who died as Oberbürgermeister in Frankfort, 1

[2] Perhaps *geradliniger* might be translated as "an old square-toes," ha reference to the antiquated cut of the old man's clothes. The fathers o

FRIEDRICH-GEORG-GOETHE,

Born Sept. 7, 1657, at Artern, in the county of Mansfeld, where his father was a farrier; from 1687 a citizen and tailor in Frankfurt-on-the-Maine; married first, ANNA ELISABETH LUTZ, a tailor's daughter (died 1700); secondly, May 4, 1705, Mrs. CORNELIA SCHELLHORN (born Sept. 27, 1668; buried March 28, 1754); died as keeper of the inn *Zum Weidenhof* at Frankfurt; buried Feb. 13, 1730.

JOHANN MICHAEL GOETHE, died 1733.

JOHANN CASPAR GOETHE, born July 31, 1710; died May 27, 1782, as Imperial Councillor in Frankfurt; married Aug. 20, 1748, KATHARINA ELIZABETH TEXTOR (born Feb. 19, 1731; died Sept. 13, 1808).

JOHANN WOLFGANG von GOETHE, born Aug. 28, 1749; died March 22, 1832; from July 13, 1788, lived with CHRISTIANE VULPIUS (died June 6, 1816); married her, Oct. 19, 1806.

CORNELIE FRIEDRICA CHRISTIANE, born Dec. 7, 1750; died June 8, 1777, at Emmendingen; married Nov. 1, 1773, JOH. GE. SCHLOSSER (born 1739; died 1799, at Frankfurt).

HERMANN JACOB, born Nov. 26, 1752; died Jan. 11, 1759.

KATHARINA ELIZABETH, born Sept. 8, 1754; died Jan. 19, 1756

JOHANNA MARIA, born March 28, 1756; died Aug. 9, 1759.

GEORG ADOLF, born June 14, 1760; died Feb. 16, 1761.

JULIUS AUGUST WALTHER von GOETHE, born Dec. 25, 1789, in Weimar; died as Privy Councillor, Oct. 28, 1830, at Rome; married April 1817, OTTILIE von POGWISCH.

MARIE ANNA LUISE SCHLOSSER, born Oct. 28, 1774; died Sept. 28, 1811; married 1795, NICOLOVIUS, at Eutin (died 1839).

ELISABETH KATHARINA JULIE SCHLOSSER, born May 10, 1777; died July 5, at Emmendingen.

WALTHER WOLFGANG von GOETHE, born Feb. 1818.

WOLFGANG MAX. von GOETHE, born Sept. 18, 1820.

ALMA von GOETHE, born Oct. 1827.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE TEXTOR FAMILY.

GEORG WEBER,
Citizen of Weickersheim, a small town in the Jaxt district, near Mergentheim.

WOLFGANG WEBER,
Councillor at Hohenlohe, and Director of the Chancery at Neuenstein; according to the custom of the time, translated his family name WEBER into Latin, and called himself TEXTOR.

JOHANN WOLFGANG TEXTOR,
Born at Neuenstein; until 1690, Vice Court Judge and President-Vicar at the Electoral Court of Justice at Heidelberg; afterwards Consul and First Syndic at Frankfurt; died there Dec. 27, 1701.

CHRISTOPH HEINRICH TEXTOR, Councillor of Justice and Advocate to the Elector Palatine; died 1716.

JOHANN NICOLAUS TEXTOR, Colonel and City Commandant; married 1737, a widow von BARCKHAUSEN, born von KLETTENBERG.

JOHANN WOLFGANG TEXTOR, born Dec. 12, 1693; died Feb. 6, 1771, as Imperial Councillor and Magistrate at Frankfurt; married ANNA MARGARETHA LINDHEIMER, daughter of Dr. CORNELIUS LINDHEIMER, Procurator of the Imperial Chamber of Justice at Wetzlar (born July 31, 1711; died April 15, 1783).

KATHARINA ELISABETH, born Feb. 19, 1731; died Sept. 13, 1808; married Aug. 20, 1748, the father of the Poet, Councillor

JOHANNA MARIA, born 1734; married Nov. 11, 1751, the druggist MELBER, in Frankfurt.

ANNA MARIA, born 1738; married Nov. 2, 1756, the clergyman M. Stark, in Frankfurt.

JOHANN JOST, born 1739; died Sept. 19, 1792, as Sheriff in Frankfurt.

ANNA CHRISTINA, born Oct. 24, 1743.

n the poet inherited the well-built frame, the erect carriage, d the measured movement which in old age became stiffness, d was construed as diplomacy or haughtiness; from him also ne that orderliness and stoicism which have so much dis- ssed those who cannot conceive genius otherwise than as abond in his habits. The craving for knowledge, the ight in communicating it, the almost pedantic attention details, which are noticeable in the poet, are all traceable the father.

The mother was more like what we conceive as the proper ent for a poet. She is one of the pleasantest figures in rman literature, and one standing out with greater vividness n almost any other. Her simple, hearty, joyous, and ctionate nature endeared her to all. She was the delight children, the favourite of poets and princes. To the last ining her enthusiasm and simplicity, mingled with great ewdness and knowledge of character, *Frau Aja*, as they istened her, was at once grave and hearty, dignified and ple. She had read most of the best German and Italian nors, had picked up considerable desultory information, had that "mother wit" which so often in women and ts seems to render culture superfluous, their rapid intuitions cipating the tardy conclusions of experience. Her letters full of spirit: not always strictly grammatical; not irre- achable in orthography; but vigorous and vivacious. r a lengthened interview with her, an enthusiast exclaimed, ow do I understand how Goethe has become the man s!"[1] Wieland, Merck, Bürger, Madame de Stael, Karl ust, and other great people sought her acquaintance.

Duchess Amalia corresponded with her as with an nate friend; and her letters were welcomed eagerly at Weimar Court. She was married at seventeen, to a man whom she had no love, and was only eighteen when the was born.[2] This, instead of making her prematurely seems to have perpetuated her girlhood. "I and my fgang," she said, "have always held fast to each other, use we were both young together." To him she trans-

[1] t generation dubbed the stiff coat of their grandfathers, with its square and collars, by the name of *magister matheseos*, the name by which thagorean proposition is known in Germany.
phemeriden der Literatur, quoted in *Nicolovius über Goethe.*

[2] overs of parallels may be reminded that Napoleon's mother was only en when the hero of Austerlitz was born.

mitted her love of story-telling, her animal spirits, her lo of everything which bore the stamp of distinctive individuali and her love of seeing happy faces around her. "Order a quiet," she says in one of her charming letters to Freiherr v Stein, "are my principal characteristics. Hence I despat at once whatever I have to do, the most disagreeable alwa first, and I gulp down the devil without looking at hi When all has returned to its proper state, then I defy a one to surpass me in good humour." Her heartiness a tolerance are the causes, she thinks, why every one likes h "I am fond of people, and *that* every one feels directly young and old. I pass without pretension through t world, and that gratifies men. I never *bemoralise* any one *always seek out the good that is in them, and leave what is b to him who made mankind, and knows how to round off angles.* In this way I make myself happy and comfortabl Who does not recognise the son in those accents? T kindliest of men inherited his loving happy nature from t heartiest of women.

He also inherited from her his dislike of unnecess agitation and emotion: that deliberate avoidance of things capable of disturbing his peace of mind, which l been construed as coldness. Her sunny nature shrank fr storms. She stipulated with her servants that they were n to trouble her with afflicting news, except upon some posit necessity for the communication. In 1805, when her son w dangerously ill at Weimar, no one ventured to speak to her the subject. Not until he had completely recovered did voluntarily enter on it. "I knew it all," she remarked, " said nothing. Now we can talk about him without my feel a stab every time his name is mentioned."

In this voluntary insulation from disastrous intelliger there is something so antagonistic to the notorious crav for excitement felt by the Teutonic races, something so unl the morbid love of intellectual drams—the fierce alcoho emotion with which we intoxicate ourselves, that it is wonder if Goethe has on this account been accused of sensibility. Yet, in truth, a very superficial knowledge of nature suffices to show that it was not from coldness avoided indulgence in the "luxury of woe." It was exc of sensibility, not want of sympathy. His delicate na shrank from the wear and tear of excitement. That wh to coarser natures would have been a stimulus, was to hi

turbance. It is doubtless the instinct of an emotional ure to seek such stimulants; but his reason was strong ugh to keep this instinct under control. Falk relates that en Goethe heard he had looked upon Wieland in death, nd thereby procured myself a miserable evening, and worse ht, he vehemently reproved me for it. Why, said he, uld I suffer the delightful impression of the features of friend to be obliterated by the sight of a disfigured mask? arefully avoided seeing Schiller, Herder, or the Duchess alia, in the coffin. I, for my part, desire to retain in my mory a picture of my departed friends more full of soul n the mere mask can furnish me."

This subjection of the instinct of curiosity to the dictates reason is not coldness. There is danger indeed of carrying oo far, and of *coddling* the mind; but into this extreme ther Goethe nor his mother can be said to have fallen. any rate, let the reader pronounce what judgment he thinks it is right that he should at the outset distinctly understand o be a characteristic of the man. The self-mastery it olies forms the keystone of his character. In him the *tive* was subjected to the *intellectual*. He was "king r himself." He, as he tells us, found men eager enough lord it over others, while indifferent whether they could e themselves—

> "Das wollen alle Herren seyn,
> Und keiner ist Herr von sich!"

made it his study to subdue into harmonious unity the ellious impulses which incessantly threatened the supremacy reason. Here, on the threshold of his career, let attention called to this cardinal characteristic: his footsteps were guided by a light tremulous in every gust, liable to fall he ground amid the hurrying agitation of vulgar instincts, a torch grasped by an iron will, and lifted high above the rents of those lower gusts, shedding a continuous steady am across the troubled path. I do not say he never mbled. At times the clamorous agitation of rebellious sions misled him as it misleads others, for he was very nan, often erring; but viewing his life as it disposes itself the broad masses necessary for a characteristic appreciation, I say that in him, more than in almost any other man his time, naked vigour of resolution, moving in alliance

with steady clearness of intellect, produced a self-mastery of the very highest kind.[1]

This he owed partly to his father and partly to his mother. It was from the latter he derived those characteristics which determined the movement and orbit of his artistic nature; her joyous, healthy temperament, humour, fancy, and susceptibility, were, in him, creative, owing to the marvellous insight which gathered up the scattered and vanishing elements of experience into new and living combinations.

CHAPTER II

THE PRECOCIOUS CHILD

JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE was born on the 28th August 1749, as the clock sounded the hour of noon, in the busy town of Frankfurt-on-the-Maine. The busy town, as may be supposed, was quite heedless of what was then passing in the corner of that low, heavy-beamed room in the *Grosse Hirsch Graben*, where an infant, black, and almost lifeless, was watched with agonising anxiety—an anxiety dissolving into tears of joy as the aged grandmother exclaimed to the pale mother "*Räthin, er lebt!* he lives!" But if the town was heedless not so were the stars, as astrologers will certify; the stars knew who was gasping for life beside his trembling mother and in solemn convocation they prefigured his future greatness. Goethe, with a grave smile, notes this conjunction of the stars.

Whatever the stars may have betokened, this August 1749 was a momentous month to Germany, if only because it gave birth to the man whose influence on his nation has been greater than that of any man since Luther, not even excepting Lessing. A momentous month in very momentous times. It was the middle of the eighteenth century: a period when the movement which had culminated in Luther was passing from religion to politics, and freedom of thought was translating itself into liberty of action. From theology the movement had communicated itself to philosophy, morals, and politics. The agitation was still mainly in the higher classes

[1] "All I have had to do I have done in kingly fashion," he said: "I let tongues wag as they pleased. What I saw to be the right thing that I did."

ut it was gradually descending to the lower. A period of eep unrest: big with events which would expand the con-eptions of all men, and bewilder some of the wisest.

It is not the biographer's province to write a history of an poch while telling the story of a life; but some historical dication is necessary, in order that the time and place ould be vividly before the reader's mind; and perhaps e readiest way to call up such a picture in a paragraph ill be to mention some of the "notables" of that period, d at what points in their career they had arrived. In at very month of August Madame du Chatelet, the learned anslator of Newton, the loving but pedantic *Uranie* of oltaire, died in childbed, leaving him without a companion, d without a counsellor to prevent his going to the court Frederick the Great. In that year Rousseau was seen in e brilliant circle of Madame d'Epinay, disputing with the ncyclopedists, declaiming eloquently on the sacredness of aternity, and going home to cast his newborn infant into e basket of the Foundling Hospital. In that year Samuel hnson was toiling manfully over his English dictionary; ibbon was at Westminster, trying with unsuccessful diligence master the Greek and Latin rudiments; Goldsmith was lighting the Tony Lumpkins of his district, and the wandering bear-leaders of genteeler sort," with his talents, d enjoying that "careless idleness of fireside and easy air," and that "tavern excitement of the game of cards, which he looked back so wistfully from his first hard ondon struggles." In that year Buffon, whose *scientific* eatness Goethe was one of the first to perceive, produced e first volume of his *Histoire Naturelle*. Haller was at öttingen performing those experiments on sensibility and itability which were to immortalise him. John Hunter, o had recently left Scotland, joined Cheselden at the elsea Hospital. Mirabeau and Alfieri were tyrants in eir nurseries; and Marat was an innocent boy of five ars old, toddling about in the Val de Travers, unmolested yet by the wickedness of "les aristocrats."

If these names have helped to call up the period, we must ek in Goethe's own pages for a picture of the place. He s painted the city of Frankfurt as one who loved it. No y in Germany was better fitted for the birthplace of this smopolitan poet. It was rich in speaking memorials of e past, remnants of old German life, lingering echoes of the

voices which sounded through the middle ages: such as a town within a town, the fortress within a fortress, the walled cloisters, the various symbolical ceremonies still preserved from feudal times, and the Jews' quarter, so picturesque, so filthy, and so strikingly significant. But if Frankfurt was thus representative of the past, it was equally representative of the present. The travellers brought there by the Rhine stream, and by the great northern roads, made it a representative of Europe, and an emporium of Commerce. It was thus a centre for that distinctively modern idea—Industrialism—which began, and must complete, the destruction of Feudalism. This two-fold character Frankfurt retains to the present day: the storks, perched upon its ancient gables look down upon the varied bustle of Fairs held by modern Commerce in the ancient streets.

The feeling for antiquity, and especially for old German life, which his native city would thus picturesquely cultivate was rivalled by a feeling for Italy and its splendours, which was cultivated under the paternal roof. His father had lived in Italy, and had retained an inextinguishable delight in all its beauties. His walls were hung with architectural drawings and views of Rome; and the poet was thus familiar from infancy with the Piazza del Popolo, St. Peter's, the Coliseum and other centres of grand associations. Typical of his own nature and strivings is this conjunction of the Classic and the German—the one lying nearest to him, in homely intimacy, the other lying outside, as a mere *scene* he was to contemplate. Goethe by nature was more Greek than German, but he never freed himself from German influence.

Thus much on time and place, the two cardinal conditions of life. Before quitting such generalities for the details of biography, it may be well to call attention to one hitherto unnoticed, viz., the moderate elevation of his social status. Placed midway between the two perilous extremes of affluence and want, his whole career received a modifying impulse from this position. He never knew adversity. This alone must necessarily have deprived him of one powerful chord which vibrates through literature. Adversity, the sternest of teachers, had nothing to teach him. He never knew the gaunt companionship of Want, whispering terrible suggestions. He never knew the necessity to conquer for himself breathing room in the world; and thus all the feelings of bitterness, opposition, and defiance, which accompany and perplex the

ruggle of life, were to him almost unknown; and he was ught nothing of the aggressive and practical energy which ese feelings develop in impetuous natures. How much of s serenity, how much of his dislike to politics, may be traced this origin?

That he was the loveliest baby ever seen, exciting admira- on wherever nurse or mother carried him, and exhibiting, swaddling clothes, the most wonderful intelligence, we need biographer to tell us. Is it not said of every baby? But at he was in truth a wonderful child we have undeniable idence, and of a kind less questionable than the statement mothers and relatives. At three years old he could seldom brought to play with little children, and only on the con- tion of their being pretty. One day, in a neighbour's house, suddenly began to cry and exclaim, "That black child ust go away! I can't bear him!" And he howled till he as carried home, where he was slowly pacified; the whole use of his grief being the ugliness of the child.

A quick, merry little girl grew up by the boy's side. Four her children also came, but soon vanished. Cornelia was e only companion who survived, and for her his affection ted from her cradle. He brought his toys to her, wanted feed her and attend on her, and was very jealous of all who proached her. "When she was taken from the cradle, over ich he watched, his anger was scarcely to be quieted. He s altogether much more easily moved to anger than to rs." To the last his love for Cornelia was passionate.

In old German towns, Frankfurt among them, the ground- or consists of a great hall where the vehicles are housed. is floor opens in folding trap-doors, for the passage of ne-casks into the cellars below. In one corner of the hall ere is a sort of lattice, opening by an iron or wooden grating on the street. This is called the *Geräms*. Here the ckery in daily use was kept; here the servants peeled their tatoes, and cut their carrots and turnips, preparatory to oking; here also the housewife would sit with her sewing, her knitting, giving an eye to what passed in the street hen anything did pass there) and an ear to a little neigh- urly gossip. Such a place was of course a favourite with e children.

One fine afternoon, when the house was quiet, Master olfgang, with his cup in his hand and nothing to do, finds mself in this *Geräms*, looking out into the silent street; and

telegraphing to the young Ochsensteins who dwelt opposite. By way of doing something he begins to fling the crockery into the street, delighted at the smashing music which it makes, and stimulated by the approbation of the brothers Ochsenstein, who chuckle at him from over the way. The plates and dishes are flying in this way, when his mother returns: she sees the mischief with a housewifely horror melting into girlish sympathy, as she hears how heartily the little fellow laughs at his escapade, and how the neighbours laugh at him.

This genial, indulgent mother employed her faculty for story-telling to his and her own delight. "Air, fire, earth and water I represented under the forms of princesses; and to all natural phenomena I gave a meaning, in which I almost believed more fervently than my little hearers. As we thought of paths which led from star to star, and that we should one day inhabit the stars, and thought of the great spirits we should meet there, I was as eager for the hours of story-telling as the children themselves; I was quite curious about the future course of my own improvisation, and any invitation which interrupted these evenings was disagreeable. There I sat and there Wolfgang held me with his large black eyes; and when the fate of one of his favourites was not according to his fancy, I saw the angry veins swell on his temples, I saw him repress his tears. He often burst in with 'But, mother, the princess won't marry the nasty tailor, even if he does kill the giant.' And when I made a pause for the night, promising to continue it on the morrow, I was certain that he would in the meanwhile think it out for himself, and so he often stimulated my imagination. When I turned the story according to his plan, and told him that he had found out the dénouement, then was he all fire and flame, and one could see his little heart beating underneath his dress! His grandmother, who made a great pet of him, was the confidante of all his ideas as to how the story would turn out, and as she repeated these to me, and I turned the story according to these hints, there was a little diplomatic secrecy between us, which we never disclosed. I had the pleasure of continuing my story to the delight and astonishment of my hearers, and Wolfgang saw with glowing eyes the fulfilment of his own conceptions, and listened with enthusiastic applause." What a charming glimpse of mother and son!

The grandmother here spoken of lived in the same house

nd when lessons were finished, away the children hurried to er room, to play. The dear old lady, proud as a grandmother, spoiled" them of course, and gave them many an eatable, hich they would get only in her room. But of all her gifts othing was comparable to the puppetshow with which she rprised them on the Christmas Eve of 1753, and which oethe says "created a new world in the house." The ader of *Wilhelm Meister* will remember with what solemn nportance the significance of such a puppetshow is treated, nd may guess how it would exercise the boy's imagination.

There was also the grandfather Textor, whose house the ildren gladly visited, and whose grave personality produced impression on the boy, all the deeper because a certain ysterious awe surrounded the monosyllabic dream-intereting old gentleman. His portrait presents him in a *rruque à huit étages*, with the heavy golden chain round s neck, suspending a medal given him by the Empress aria Theresa; but Goethe remembered him more vividly his dressing-gown and slippers, moving amid the flowers his garden, weeding, training, watering; or seated at the nner table where on Sundays he received his guests.

The mother's admirable method of cultivating the inventive tivity of the boy, finds its pendant in the father's method of ltivating his receptive faculties. He speaks with less appro-tion than it deserved of his father's idea of education; probly because late in life he felt keenly his deficiencies in stematic training. But the principle upon which the father oceeded was an excellent one, namely, that of exercising the ellect rather than the memory. An anecdote was dictated, nerally something from everyday life, or perhaps a trait m the life of Frederick the Great; on this the boy wrote logues and moral reflections in Latin and German. Some these have been preserved and published; a glance at them ows what a mastery over Latin was achieved in his eighth ar. We can never be *quite* certain that the hand of the ster is not mingled with that of the child; but the very thod of independence which the master throughout pursued contrary to a supposition of his improving the exercises, hough the style is certainly above what even advanced pils usually achieve. Dr. Wisemann, of Frankfurt, to whom are indebted for these exercises and compositions, written ring Goethe's sixth, seventh, and eighth years, thinks there n be no doubt of their being the unassisted productions of

the boy. In one of the dialogues there is a pun which prove that the dialogue was written in Latin first, and then trans lated into German. It is this: the child is making wax figure his father asks him why he does not relinquish such trivialitie The word used is *nuces*, which, meaning trivialities in a meta phorical sense, is by the boy wilfully interpreted in its ordinar sense, as *nuts*—"*cera nunc ludo non nucibus*"—I play with wa not with nuts. The German word *nüsse* means nuts simpl and has no metaphorical meaning.

Here is one of his moral reflections. "Horatius and Cicer were indeed Heathens, yet more sensible than many Christian for the one says silver is baser than gold, gold than virtue; an the other says nothing is so beautiful as virtue. Moreove many Heathens have surpassed Christians in virtue. Who wa truer in friendship than Damon? more generous than Ale ander? more just than Aristides? more abstinent tha Diogenes? more patient than Socrates? more humane tha Vespasian? more industrious than Apelles and Demosthenes Platitudes these, doubtless; but they are platitudes whic serve many as the ripe maxims of maturity. They give a notion of the boy being somewhat "old-fashioned," an they show great progress in culture. His progress in Gree was remarkable, as may be seen from his published exercise Italian he learned by listening to his father teaching Corneli He pretended to be occupied with his own lesson, and caug up all that was said. French, too, he learned, as the exercis testify; and thus before he is eight, we find him writi German, French, Italian, Latin, and Greek.

He was, in fact, a precocious child. This will probab startle many readers, especially if they have adopted th current notion that precocity is a sign of disease, and th marvellous children are necessarily evanescent fruits whi never ripen, early blossoms which wither early. *Observatu fere est celerius occidere festinatam maturitatem*, says Quintilia in the mournful passage which records the loss of his darli son; and many a proud parent has seen his hopes frustrat by early death, or by matured mediocrity following the brillia promise. It may help to do away with some confusion on th subject, if we bear in mind that men distinguish themselves *receptive* capacity and by *productive* capacity; they learn, a they invent. In men of the highest class these two qualit are united. Shakespeare and Goethe are not less remarkab for the variety of their knowledge, than for the activity of th

nvention. But as we call the child clever who learns his essons rapidly, and the child clever who shows wit, sagacity, nd invention, this ambiguity of phrase has led to surprise hen the child who was "so clever" at school, turns out a nediocre man; or, conversely, when the child who was a lunce at school turns out a man of genius.

Goethe's precocity was nothing abnormal. It was the ctivity of a mind at once greatly receptive and greatly productive. Through life he manifested the same eager desire or knowledge, not in the least alarmed by that bugbear of knowledge stifling originality," which alarms some men of uestionable genius and unquestionable ignorance. He knew hat if abundant fuel stifles miserable fires, it makes the great re blaze.

> "Ein Quidam sagt: 'Ich bin von keiner Schule;
> Kein Meister lebt mit dem ich buhle;
> Auch bin ich weit davon entfernt
> Dass ich von Todten was gelernt.'
> Das heisst, wenn ich ihn recht verstand:
> 'Ich bin ein Narr auf eigne Hand!'"[1]

In the summer of 1754 the old house was entirely rebuilt, Volfgang officiating at the ceremony of laying the foundation, ressed as a little bricklayer. The quick, observant boy found nuch in this rebuilding of the paternal house to interest him; e chatted with the workmen, learning their domestic circumtances, and learning something of the builder's art, which in fter years so often occupied him. This event, moreover, led o his being sent to a friend during the restoration of the upper art of the house—for the family inhabited the house during s reconstruction, which was made story by story from the round upwards—and the event also led to his being sent o school.

Viehoff thinks that Germany would have had quite another Goethe had the child been kept at a public school till he went o the university; and quotes Gervinus to the effect that Goethe's home education prevented his ever thoroughly appreiating history, and the struggles of the masses. Not accepting

[1] An exquisite epigram, which may be rendered thus:—

> An author boasting said: "I follow none;
> I owe my wisdom to myself alone;
> To neither ancient nor to modern sage
> Am I indebted for a single page."—
> To place this boasting in its proper light:
> This author is—a Fool in his own Right!

the doctrine that Character is formed by Circumstances, I cannot accept the notion of school life affecting the poet to this extent. We have only to reflect how many men are educated at public schools *without* their imbibing a love of history and sympathy with the masses, to see that Goethe's peculiarities must have had some other source than home education. That source lay in his character. Moreover, it is extremely questionable whether Goethe could have learned to sympathise with the masses in a school of one of the German imperial towns, where there could be no "masses," but only close corporations, ruled and ruling according to narrow and somewhat sordid ideas. From intercourse with the sons of Frankfurt citizens, no patriotism, certainly no republicanism, was to be learned. Nor was the public teaching, especially the historical teaching, likely to counteract this influence, or to inspire the youth with great national sympathies. Those ideas had not penetrated schools and universities. History, as taught by Schiller and Heeren, was undreamed of. "When I entered at Tübingen in 1826,' writes Mr. Demmler to me, "the university of Paulus, Schelling, Hegel, and, in days of yore, of Melanchthon, Reuchlin and Kepler, traditions were still surviving of the lectures of Rösler, professor of history. In one of them, as I was told by a fellow of the college who had heard it, the old cynical sceptic said, 'As regards the Maid of Orleans, I conclude she was a cow girl, and was, moreover, on a very friendly footing with the young officers.' Another time he said, 'Homer was a blind schoolmaster and wandering minstrel, and I cannot comprehend the fuss that is made about his poems.'" If this was the man who instructed Schelling and Hegel (1790–94), we may form some estimate of what Goethe would have heard forty years earlier.

One thing, however, he did learn at school, and that was disgust at schools. He, carefully trained at home, morally as well as physically, had to mingle with schoolboys who were what most schoolboys are,—dirty, rebellious, cruel, low in their tastes and habits. The contrast was very painful to him and he was glad when the completion of his father's house once more enabled him to receive instruction at home.

One school anecdote he relates which well illustrates his power of self-command. Fighting during school time was severely punished. One day the teacher did not arrive at the appointed time. The boys played together till the hour was

early over, and then three of them, left alone with Wolfgang, esolved to drive him away. They cut up a broom, and re-ppeared with the switches. "I saw their design, but I at nce resolved not to resist them till the clock struck. They egan pitilessly lashing my legs. I did not stir, although the ain made the minutes terribly long. My wrath deepened ith my endurance, and on the first stroke of the hour I rasped one of my assailants by the hair and hurled him to ne ground, pressing my knee on his back; I drew the head f the second, who attacked me behind, under my arm and early throttled him; with a dexterous twist I threw the third at on the ground. They bit, scratched, and kicked. But ny soul was swelling with one feeling of revenge, and I knocked neir heads together without mercy. A shout of murder rought the household round us. But the scattered switches nd my bleeding legs bore witness to my story."

CHAPTER III

EARLY EXPERIENCES

r is profoundly false to say that "Character is formed by ircumstance," unless the phrase, with unphilosophic equivo-ation, include the whole complexity of circumstances, from reation downwards. Character is to outward Circumstance hat the Organism is to the outward world: living *in* it, but ot specially determined *by* it. A wondrous variety of vegetable nd animal organisms live and flourish under circumstances hich furnish the *means* of living, but do not determine the *pecific forms* of each organism. In the same way *various* naracters live under *identical* circumstances, nourished by nem, not formed by them. Each character assimilates, om surrounding circumstance, that which is by it assimilable, ejecting the rest; just as from the earth and air the plant raws those elements which will serve it as food, rejecting the est. Every biologist knows that Circumstance has a *modify-g* influence; but he also knows that those modifications are nly possible within certain limits. Abundance of food and eculiar treatment will modify the ferocity of a wild beast; but will not make the lion a lamb. I have known a cat, living a mill, from abundance of fish food take spontaneously to

the water; but the cat was distinctively a cat, and not an otter, although she had lost her dread of water. Goethe truly says that if Raphael were to paint peasants at an inn he could not help making them look like Apostles, whereas Teniers would make his Apostles look like Dutch boors; each artist working according to his own inborn genius.

Instead, therefore, of saying that man is the creature of Circumstance, it would be nearer the mark to say that man is the architect of Circumstance. It is Character which builds an existence out of Circumstance. Our strength is measured by our plastic power. From the same materials one man builds palaces, another hovels, one warehouses, another villas; bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks, until the architect can make them something else. Thus it is that in the same family, in the same circumstances, one man rears a stately edifice, while his brother, vacillating and incompetent, lives for ever amid ruins: the block of granite which was an obstacle on the pathway of the weak, becomes a stepping-stone on the pathway of the strong.[1]

If the reader agrees with this conception of the influence of circumstances, he will see that I was justified in laying some stress on Goethe's social position, though I controverted Viehoff and Gervinus on the point of school education. The continued absence of Want is one of those permanent and powerful conditions which necessarily modify a character. The well-fed lion loses his ferocity. But the temporary and incidental effect of school education, and other circumstances of minor importance, can never be said to modify a character; they only more or less accelerate its development.

Goethe furnishes us with a striking illustration of the degree in which outward circumstances affect character. He became early the favourite of several eminent painters, was constantly in their ateliers, playing with them, and making them explain their works to him. He was, moreover, a frequent visitor at picture sales and galleries, till at last his mind became so familiarised with the subjects treated by artists, that he could at once tell what historical or biblical subject was represented

[1] "The greatness or the smallness of a man is determined for him at his birth as strictly as it is determined for a fruit, whether it is to be a currant or an apricot. Education, favourable circumstances, resolution, industry, may do much, in a certain sense they do *everything;* that is to say, they determine whether the poor apricot shall fall in the form of a green bead, blighted by the east wind, and be trodden under foot; or whether it shall expand into tender pride and sweet brightness of golden velvet."—RUSKIN, *Modern Painters*, iii. p. 44.

n every painting he saw. Indeed, his imagination was so timulated by familiarity with these works, that in his tenth r eleventh year he wrote a description of twelve possible ictures on the history of Joseph, and some of his concep- ions were thought worthy of being executed by artists of enown. It may be further added, in anticipation, that luring the whole of his life he was thrown much with ainters and pictures, and was for many years tormented vith the desire of becoming an artist. If, therefore, Circum- tance had the power of forming faculty, we ought to find him painter. What is the fact? The fact is that he had *not* the aculty which makes a painter; he had no faculty, properly peaking, for plastic art, and years of labour, aided by the nstruction and counsel of the best masters, were powerless o give him even a respectable facility. All therefore that Circumstance did in this case was to give his other faculties ne opportunity of exercising themselves in art; it did not reate the special faculty required. Circumstance can create o faculty: it is food, not nutrition; opportunity, not character.

Other boys, besides Goethe, heard the Lisbon earthquake agerly discussed; but they had not their religious doubts wakened by it, as his were awakened in his sixth year. This atastrophe, which, in 1755, spread consternation over Europe, he has described as having greatly perturbed him. The narratives he heard of a magnificent capital suddenly mitten—churches, houses, towers, falling with a crash—the ursting land vomiting flames and smoke—and sixty thousand ouls perishing in an instant—shook his faith in the bene- cence of Providence. "God, the creator and preserver of eaven and earth," he says, "whom the first article of our reed declared to be so wise and benignant, had not dis- layed paternal care in thus consigning both the just and ne unjust to the same destruction. In vain my young ind strove to resist these impressions. It was impossible; ne more so as the wise and religious themselves could not gree upon the view to be taken of the event."

At this very time Voltaire was agitating the same doubts.

"Direz-vous, en voyant cet amas de victimes:
Dieu s'est vengé, leur mort est le prix de leur crimes?
Quel crime, quelle faute ont commis ces enfans
Sur le sein maternel écrasés et sanglans?
Lisbonne qui n'est plus, eût-elle plus de vices
Que Londres, que Paris, plongés dans les délices?
Lisbonne est abîmée; et l'on danse à Paris."

We are not, however, to suppose that the child rushed hastily to such a conclusion. He debated it in his own mind as he heard it debated around him. Bettina records that on his coming one day from church, where he had listened to a sermon on the subject, in which God's goodness was justified, his father asked him what impression the sermon had made. "Why," said he, "it may after all be a much simpler matter than the clergyman thinks; God knows very well that an immortal soul can receive no injury from a mortal accident."

Doubts once raised would of course recur, and the child began to settle into a serious disbelief in the benignity of Providence, learning to consider God as the wrathful Deity depicted by the Hebrews. This was strengthened by the foolish conduct of those around him, who, on the occasion of a terrible thunderstorm which shattered the windows, dragged him and his sister into a dark passage, "where the whole household, distracted with fear, tried to conciliate the angry Deity by frightful groans and prayers." Many children are thus made sceptics; but in a deeply reflective mind such thoughts never long abide, at least not under the influences of modern culture, which teaches that Evil is essentially a narrow finite thing, thrown into obscurity on any comprehensive view of the Universe; and that the amount of evil massed together from every quarter must be held as small compared with the broad beneficence of Nature.

The doubts which troubled Wolfgang gradually subsided. In his family circle he was the silent reflective listener to constant theological debates. The various sects separating from the established church all seemed to be animated by the one desire of approaching the Deity, especially through Christ more nearly than seemed possible through the ancient forms. It occurred to him that he, also, might make such an approach, and in a more direct way. Unable to ascribe a form to the Deity, he "resolved to seek Him in His works, and in the good old Bible fashion, to build an altar to Him. For this purpose he selected some types, such as ores and other natural productions, and arranged them in symbolical order on the elevations of a music stand; on the apex was to be a flame typical of the soul's aspiration, and for this a pastille did duty. Sunrise was awaited with impatience. The glittering of the house tops gave signal; he applied a burning-glass to the pastille, and thus was the worship

onsummated by a priest of seven years old, alone in his edroom!"[1]

Lest the trait just cited should make us forget that we are acing the career of a child, it may be well to recall the necdote related by Bettina, who had it from his mother; will serve to set us right as to the childishness. One day s mother, seeing him from her window cross the street with s comrades, was amused with the gravity of his carriage, nd asked laughingly, if he meant thereby to distinguish him-lf from his companions. The little fellow replied, "I *begin* ith this. Later on in life I shall distinguish myself in far her ways."

On another occasion, he plagued her with questions as to hether the stars would perform all they had promised at his rth. "Why," said she, "must you have the assistance the stars, when other people get on very well without?" I am not to be satisfied with what does for other people!" id the juvenile Jupiter.

He had just attained his seventh year when the Seven ears' War broke out. His grandfather espoused the cause Austria, his father that of Frederick. This difference of inion brought with it contentions, and finally separation etween the families. The exploits of the Prussian army ere enthusiastically cited on the one side and depreciated the other. It was an all-absorbing topic, awakening ssionate partisanship. Men looked with strange feelings the struggle which the greatest captain of his age was aintaining against Russia, Austria, and France. The ruler of ot more than five millions of men was fighting unaided against e rulers of more than a hundred millions; and, in spite of his leged violation of honour, it was difficult to hear without thusiasm of his brilliant exploits. Courage and genius in sperate circumstances always awaken sympathy; and men used not to ask what justification there was for the seizure of lesia, nor why the Saxon standards drooped heavily in the urches of Berlin. The roar of victorious cannon stunned e judgment; the intrepid general was blindly worshipped. he Seven Years' War soon became a German epos. Archen-ltz wrote its history (1791); and this work—noisy with ard-room bragging and folly, the rant of a *miles gloriosus*

[1] A similar anecdote is related of himself by that strange Romancist, once idol of his day, and now almost entirely forgotten, Restif de la Bretonne. See *Le Illuminé*, par GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

turned *philosophe*—was nevertheless received with enthusiasm was translated into Latin, and read in schools in company with Tacitus and Cæsar.

This Seven Years' War was a circumstance from which as it is thought, Goethe ought to have received some epi inspiration. He received from it precisely that which wa food to his character. He caught the grand enthusiasm but, as he says, it was the *personality* of the hero, rather tha the greatness of his cause, which made him rejoice in ever victory, copy the songs of triumph, and the lampoons directe against Austria. He learnt now the effects of party spirit At the table of his grandfather he had to hear galling sarcasms and vehement declamations showered on his hero. He hear Frederick "shamefully slandered." "And as in my sixt year, after the Lisbon earthquake, I doubted the beneficenc of Providence, so now, on account of Frederick, I began t doubt the justice of the world."

Over the doorway of the house in which he was born wa a lyre and a star, announcing, as every interpreter will certify that a poet was to make that house illustrious. The poeti faculty early manifested itself. We have seen him inventin conclusions for his mother's stories; and as he grew olde he began to invent stories for the amusement of his playfellow after he had filled his mind with images—

"Lone sitting on the shores of old Romance."

He had read the *Orbis Pictus*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Homer *Iliad* in prose, *Virgil* in the original, *Telemachus*, *Robinso Crusoe*, *Anson's Voyages*, with such books as *Fortunatu The Wandering Jew*, *The Four Sons of Aymon*, &c. He al read and learned by heart most of the poets of that da Gellert, Haller, who had really some gleams of poetry; an Canitz, Hagedorn, Drollinger,—writers then much belove now slumbering upon dusty shelves, unvisited, except by a occasional historian, and by spiders of an inquiring mind.

Not only did he tell stories, he wrote them also, as w gather from a touching little anecdote preserved by Bettin The small-pox had carried off his little brother Jacob. T the surprise of his mother, Wolfgang shed no tears, believi Jacob to be with God in heaven. "Did you not love yo little brother, then," asked his mother, "that you do n grieve for his loss?" He ran to his room, and from und

e bed drew a quantity of papers on which he had written ries and lessons. "All these I had written that I might ch them to him," said the child. He was then nine ars old.

Shortly before the death of his brother he was startled the sound of the warder's trumpet from the chief tower, nouncing the approach of troops. This was in January 59. It seemed as if the warder never *would* cease blowing sounding horn. On came the troops in continuous masses, d the rolling tumult of their drums called all the women the windows, and all the boys in admiring crowds into e streets. The troops were French. They seized the ard-house, and in a little while the city was a camp. To ke matters worse, these troops were at war with Frederick, om Wolfgang and his father worshipped. They were soon leted through the town, and things relapsed into their ual routine, varied by a military occupation. In the oethe-house an important personage was quartered,—Count Thorane, the king's lieutenant, a man of taste and muni- ence, who assembled round him artists and celebrities, and n the affectionate admiration of Wolfgang, though he failed overcome the hatred of the old councillor.

This occupation of Frankfurt brought with it many advan- ges to Goethe. It relaxed the severity of paternal book ucation, and began another kind of tuition—that of life d manners. The perpetual marching through the streets, e brilliant parades, the music, the "pomp, pride, and cir- mstance" were not without their influence. Moreover, now gained conversational familiarity with French,[1] and quaintance with the theatre. The French nation always ries its "civilisation" with it, namely, a café and a theatre. Frankfurt both were immediately opened, and Goethe was sented with a "free admission" to the theatre, a privilege used daily, not always understanding, but always enjoying at he saw. In tragedy the measured rhythm, slow utter- ce, and abstract language enabled him to understand the nes, better than he understood comedy, wherein the lan- age, besides moving amid the details of private life, was o more rapidly spoken. But at the theatre, boys are not ical, and do not need to understand a play in order to

[1] He says that he had never learned French before; but this is erroneous, his exercises prove.

enjoy it.[1] A *Racine*, found upon his father's shelves, w eagerly studied, and the speeches were declaimed with mo or less appreciation of their meaning.

The theatre, and acquaintance with a chattering litt braggart, named Derones, gave him such familiarity with th language, that in a month he surprised his parents with h facility. This Derones was acquainted with the actors, an introduced him "behind the scenes." At ten years of age t go "behind the scenes" means a great deal. We shall se hereafter how early he was introduced behind the scenes c life. For the present let it be noted that he was a frequente of the green-room, and admitted into the dressing-room, whe the actors and actresses dressed and undressed with philo sophic disregard to appearances; and this, from repeate visits, he also learned to regard as quite natural.

A grotesque scene took place between these two boy Derones excelled, as he affirmed, in "affairs of honour." H had been engaged in several, and had always managed t disarm his antagonist, and then nobly forgive him. One da he pretended that Wolfgang had insulted him: satisfactio was peremptorily demanded, and a duel was the resul Imagine Wolfgang, aged twelve, arrayed in shoes and silve buckles, fine woollen stockings, dark serge breeches, gree coat with gold facings, a waistcoat of gold cloth, cut out c his father's wedding waistcoat, his hair curled and powdered his hat under his arm, and little sword, with silk sword-kno This little mannikin stands opposite his antagonist with thea trical formality; swords clash, thrusts come quick upon eac other, the combat grows hot, when the point of Derone rapier lodges in the bow of Wolfgang's sword-knot; hereupo the French boy, with great magnanimity, declares that he i satisfied! The two embrace, and retire to a café to refres themselves with a glass of almond milk.[2]

[1] Well do I remember, as a child of the same age, my intense delight at th French theatre, although certainly no three consecutive phrases could hav been understood by me. Nay, so great was this delight, that although w regarded the French custom, of opening theatres on Sunday, with the pro foundest sense of its "wickedness," the attraction became irresistible: an one Sunday night, at Nantes, my brother and I stole into the theatre wit pricking consciences. To this day I see the actors gesticulating, and hear th audience cry *bis! bis!* redemanding a *couplet* (in which we joined with a stou British *encore!*); and to this day I remember how we laughed at what w certainly understood only in passing glimpses. Goethe's ignorance of th language was, I am sure, no obstacle to his enjoyment.

[2] To remove incredulity, it may be well to remind the reader that to thi day German youths fight out their quarrels with swords—not fists.

Theatrical ambition, which stirs us all, soon prompted Wolfgang. As a child he had imitated Terence; he was now to make a more elaborate effort in the style of Piron. When the play was completed he submitted it to Derones, who, pointing out several grammatical blunders, promised to examine it more critically, and talked of giving it *his* support with the manager. Wolfgang saw, in his mind's eye, the name of his play already placarded at the corners of the street! Unhappily Derones in his critical capacity was merciless. He picked the play to pieces, and stunned the poor author with the critical jargon of that day; proclaimed the absolute integrity of the Three Unities, abused the English, laughed at the Germans, and maintained the sovereignty of French taste in so confident a style, that his listener was without a reply. Not silenced, however, he was not convinced. It set him thinking on those critical canons. He studied the treatise on the Unities by Corneille, and the prefaces of Racine. The result of these studies was profound contempt for that system; and it is, perhaps, to Derones that we owe something of the daring defiance of all "rule," which startled Germany in *Goetz von Berlichingen.*

CHAPTER IV

VARIOUS STUDIES

At length, June 1761, the French quitted Frankfurt; and studies were seriously resumed. Mathematics, music, and drawing were commenced under paternal superintendence. For mathematics Wolfgang had no aptitude; for music little; he learned to play on the harpsichord, and subsequently on the violoncello, but he never attained any proficiency. Drawing continued through life a pleasant exercise.

Left now to the calm of uninterrupted studies, he made gigantic strides. Even the hours of recreation were filled with some useful occupation. He added English to his polyglott store; and to keep up his several languages, he invented a Romance, wherein six or seven brothers and sisters scattered over the world corresponded with each other. The eldest describes in good German all the incidents of his travels; his sister answers in womanly style with short sharp sentences,

and nothing but full stops, much as *Siegwart* was afterwar written. Another brother studies theology, and therefo writes in Latin, with postcripts in Greek. A third and a fourt clerks at Hamburgh and Marseilles, take English and Frenc Italian is given to a musician; while the youngest, who r mains at home, writes in Jew-German. This romance l him to a more accurate study of geography. Having plac his characters in various parts of the globe, he was not satisfi till he had a distinct idea of these localities, so that the objec and events should be consonant with probability. Whi trying to master the strange dialect—Jew-German—he was l to the study of Hebrew. As the original language of the O Testament this seemed to him an indispensable acquisitio His father consented to give him a Hebrew master; a although he attained no scholarship in that difficult languag yet the reading, translating, and committing to memory various parts of the Bible, brought out the meaning mo vividly before him; as every one will understand who co pares the lasting effect produced by the laborious scho reading of Sallust and Livy, with the facile reading of Roberts and Hume. The Bible made a profound impression upo him. To a boy of his constitutional reflectiveness, the seve study of this book could not fail to exercise a deep and pe meating influence; nor, at the same time, in one so accustom to think for himself, could it fail to awaken certain doub "The contradiction," he says, "between the actual or possibl and tradition, forcibly arrested me. I often posed my tut with the sun standing still on Gideon, and the moon in t valley of Ajalon; not to mention other incongruities a impossibilities. All my doubts were now awakened, as order to master the Hebrew I studied the literal version Schmidt, printed under the text."

One result of these Hebrew studies was a biblical poe on Joseph and his Brethren; which he dictated to a po half idiot who lived in his father's house, and who had mania for copying or writing under dictation. Goethe so found the process of dictation of great service; and throu life it continued to be his favourite mode of compositio All his best thoughts and expressions, he says, came to hi while walking; he could do nothing seated.

To these multifarious studies in Literature must be add multifarious studies of Life. The old Frankfurt city with busy crowds, its fairs, its mixed population, and its ma

urces of excitement, offered great temptations, and great sture to so desultory a genius. This is perhaps a case herein Circumstance may be seen influencing the direction Character. A boy of less impressionable nature, of less any-sided curiosity, would have lived in such a city unsturbed; some eyes would see little of the variety, some nds would be unsolicited by the exciting objects. But oethe's desultory, because impulsive, nature found continual citement in fresh objects; and he was thus led to study any things, to grasp at many forms of life, instead of contrating himself upon a few. A large continuity of thought d effort was perhaps radically uncongenial to such a temperaent; yet one cannot help speculating whether under other cumstances he might not have achieved it. Had he been ared in a quiet little old German town, where he would have ily seen the same faces in the silent streets, and come in ntact with the same characters, his culture might have been s various, but it might perhaps have been deeper. Had he en reared in the country, with only the changing seasons d the sweet serenities of Nature to occupy his attention en released from study, he would certainly have been a fferent poet. The long summer afternoons spent in lonely mbles, the deepening twilights filled with shadowy visions, e slow uniformity of his external life necessarily throwing n more and more upon the subtler diversities of inward perience, would inevitably have influenced his genius in ite different directions, would have animated his works with very different spirit. Yet who shall say that to him this uld have been all gain? Who shall say that it would not ve been a loss? For such an organisation as his the life led was perhaps the very best. He was desultory, and the rieties of objects which solicited his attention, while they lped to encourage that tendency, also helped to nourish his nd with images and experience, such as afterwards became e richest material for his art. His mind was concrete, and this many-coloured life at Frankfurt, it found abundant terial.

At any rate it is idle to speculate on what would have been; must concern ourselves with what was. The boy saw much life, in the lower as in the upper classes. He passed from e society of the Count de Thorane, and of the artists whom e Count assembled round him (from whom the boy learned nething of the technical details of painting), to the society

of the Jews in the strange, old, filthy, but deeply-interesti
Judengasse; or to that of various artisans, in whose shops H
curiosity found perpetual food. The Jews were doub
interesting to him: as social pariahs, over whom there hover
a mingled mystery of terror and contempt; and as descen
ants of the Chosen People, who preserved the language, th
opinions, and many of the customs of the old biblical rac
He was impressed by their adherence to old customs; by the
steadfastness and courageous activity; by their strange featur
and accents; by their bright cleverness and good natur
The pretty Jewish maidens, also, smiled agreeably upon hi
He began to mingle with them; managed to get permissio
to attend some of their ceremonies; and attended the
schools. As to artisans, he was all his life curious about the
handicrafts, and fond of being admitted into their fami
circles. Scott himself was not fonder of talking to one; n
did Scott make better use of such manifold experienc
Frederika's sister told her visitor that Goethe knew sever
handicrafts, and had even learned basket-making from a lan
man in Sesenheim. Here in Frankfurt the boy was welcon
in many a shop. The jeweller, Lautensack, gladly admitte
him to witness the mysteries of his art, while he made th
bouquet of jewels for the Kaiser, or a diamond snuff-bo
which Rath Goethe had ordered as a present for his wife; th
boy eagerly questioning him respecting precious stones, ar
the engravings which the jeweller possessed. Nothnagel, th
painter, had established an oil-cloth manufactory; and th
boy not only learned all the processes, but lent a helpi
hand.

Besides these forms of life, there were others whose i
fluence must not be overlooked; one of these brings befo
us the Fräulein von Klettenburg, of whom we first get
glimpse in connection with his Confirmation, which took pla
at this period, 1763. The readers of *Wilhelm Meister* a
familiar with this gentle and exquisite character, where s
is represented in the "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul."[1]
the "Confessions" we see that the "piety" and retireme
are represented less as the consequences of evangelical il
mination, than of moral serenity and purity shrinking fro

[1] Or as we in England, following Carlyle, have been misled into calling
the "Confessions of a Fair Saint." The *schöne Seele—une belle âme*, was
of the favourite epithets of the last century. Goethe applies it to Klopsto
who was neither "saint nor fair."

ntact with a world of which it has been her fate to see the arsest features. The real Fräulein von Klettenburg it is rhaps now impossible to separate from the ideal so beautilly painted by Goethe. On him her influence was avowedly ry great, both at this period and subsequently. It was not much the effect of religious discussion, as the experience gave him of a deeply religious nature. She was neither got nor prude. Her faith was an inner light which shed ld radiance around her.[1] Moved by her influence, he wrote series of *Religious Odes*, after the fashion of that day, and eatly pleased his father by presenting them copied neatly in quarto volume. His father begged that every year he would esent him with such a volume.

A very different sort of female influence has now to be uched on. His heart began to flutter with the emotions love. He was not quite fifteen, when Gretchen, the sister one of his disreputable companions, first set his youthful lses throbbing to the movements of the divine passion. ne story is told in a rambling way in the Autobiography, and ay here be very briefly dismissed. He had often turned his etical talents to *practical* purposes, namely, writing wedding d funeral verses, the produce of which went in joyous astings. In these he was almost daily thrown with Gretchen; t she, though kind, treated him as a child, and never pertted the slightest familiarity. A merry life they led, in cnics and pleasure bouts; and the coronation of the Kaiser seph II. was the occasion of increased festivity. One ght, after the fatigues of a sight-seeing day, the hours rolled heeded over these thoughtless, merry heads, and the stroke midnight startled them. To his dismay, Wolfgang found had forgotten the door-key with which hitherto he had en able to evade paternal knowledge of his late hours. etchen proposed that they should all remain together, d pass the night in conversation. This was agreed on. t, as in all such cases, the effort was vain. Fatigue weighed wn their eyelids; conversation became feebler and feebler; o strangers already slumbered in corners of the room; one end sat in a corner with his betrothed, her head reposing on shoulder; another crossing his arms upon the table, rested head upon them—and snored. The noisy room had

[1] In VARNHAGEN VON ENSE'S *Vermischte Schriften* (vol. iii. p. 33), the der will find a few significant details respecting this remarkable person, and ne of her poems.

become silent. Gretchen and her lover sat by the wind talking in undertones. Fatigue at length conquered her al and drooping her head upon his shoulder she too slept. W tender pride he supported that delicious burden, till like t rest he gave way, and slept.

It was broad day when he awoke. Gretchen was standi before a mirror arranging her cap. She smiled on him mo amiably than ever she had smiled before; and pressed his ha tenderly as he departed. But now, while he seemed drawi nearer to her, the dénouement was at hand. Some of t joyous companions had been guilty of nefarious practic such as forgeries of documents. His friend and Gretch were involved in the accusation, though falsely. Wolfga had to undergo a severe investigation, which, as he was p fectly innocent, did not much afflict him; but an afflicti came out of the investigation, for Gretchen in her depositi concerning him, said, "I will not deny that I have often se him, and seen him with pleasure, but I treated him as a chi and my affection for him was merely that of a sister." H exasperation may be imagined. A boy aspiring to the dign of manhood knows few things more galling than to be treat as a boy by the girl whom he has honoured with his homa He suffered greatly at this destruction of his romance: nigh was his pillow wet with tears; food became repugnant to hi life had no more an object.

But pride came to his aid; pride and that volatility of you which compensates for extra sensitiveness by extra facility forgetting. He threw himself into study, especially philosophy, under guidance of a tutor, a sort of *Wagner* the young *Faust*. This tutor, who preferred dusty quartos all the landscapes in the world, used to banter him upon be a true German, such as Tacitus describes, avid of the emotio excited by solitude and scenery. Laughter weaned him from the enjoyment. He was enjoying his first sorrow: luxury of melancholy, the romance of a forlorn existen drove him into solitude. Like Bellerophon he fed upon own heart, away from the haunts of men. He made frequ walking excursions. Those mountains which from earli childhood had stood so distant, "haunting him like a passio were now his favourite resorts. He visited Homburg, Kr burg, Königstein, Wiesbaden, Schwalbach, Biberich. Th filled his mind with lovely images.

Severer studies were not neglected. To please his father

as diligent in application to jurisprudence; to please himself e was still more diligent in literature: *Morhof's Polyhistor*, *essner's Isagoge*, and *Bayle's Dictionary*, filled him with the nbition to become an University Professor. Herein, as, deed, throughout his career, we see the strange impressibility his nature, which, like the fabled chameleon, takes its lour from every tree it lies under.

The melancholy fit did not last long. A circle of lively ends, among them Horn, of whom we shall hear more anon, ew him into gaiety again. Their opinion of his talents pears to have been enormous; their love for him, and in- rest in all he did, was of the kind which followed him through e. No matter what his mood—in the wildest student-period, the startling genius-period, and in the diplomatic-period whatever offence his manner created, was soon forgotten the irresistible fascination of his nature. The secret of at fascination was his own overflowing lovingness, and his nuine interest in every individuality, however opposite to s own.

With these imperfect glances at his early career we close is book, on his departure from home for the university of eipsic. Before finally quitting this period, we may take a rvey of the *characteristics* it exhibits, as some guide in our ture inquiries.

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CHAPTER V

THE CHILD IS FATHER TO THE MAN

s in the soft round lineaments of childhood we trace the atures which after years will develop into more decided rms, so in the moral lineaments of the Child may be traced e characteristics of the Man. But an apparent solution of ntinuity takes place in the transition period; so that the uth is in many respects unlike what he has been in child- od, and what he will be in maturity. In youth, when the ssions begin to stir, the character is made to swerve from e orbit previously traced. Passion, more than Character, les the hour. Thus we often see the prudent child turn out extravagant youth; but he crystallises once more into udence, as he hardens with age.

This was certainly the case with Goethe, who, if he had

died young, like Shelley or Keats, would have left a nam among the most *genial*, not to say extravagant, of poets; b who, living to the age of eighty-two, had fifty years of crysta lisation to acquire a definite figure which perplexes critics. his childhood, scanty as the details are which enable us reconstruct it, we see the main features of the man. Let glance rapidly at them.

And first of his *manysidedness*. Seldom has a boy exhibite such variety of faculty. The multiplied activity of his life prefigured in the varied tendencies of his childhood. We s him as an orderly, somewhat formal, inquisitive, reasonin deliberative child, a precocious learner, an omnivorous reade and a vigorous logician who thinks for himself—so ind pendent, that at six years of age he doubts the beneficence the Creator; at seven, doubts the competence and justice the world's judgment. He is inventive, poetical, proud, lovin volatile, with a mind open to all influences, swayed by eve gust, and yet, while thus swayed as to the direction of h activity, master over that activity. The most diverse cha acters, the most antagonistic opinions interest him. H is very studious: no bookworm more so; alternately bu with languages, mythology, antiquities, law, philosophy, poetr and religion; yet he joins in all festive scenes, gets famili with life in various forms, and stays out late o' nights. He also troubled by melancholy, dreamy moods, forcing him ev and anon into solitude.

Among the dominant characteristics, however, are seriou ness, formality, rationality. He is by no means a naugh boy. He gives his parents no tremulous anxiety as to wh will become of him. He seems very much master of himse It is this which in later years perplexed his judges, who cou not reconcile this appearance of self-mastery, this absence enthusiasm, with their conceptions of a poet. Assuredly had enthusiasm, if ever man had it: at least, if enthusias (being "full of the God") means being filled with a divi idea, and by its light working steadily. He had little of t other kind of enthusiasm—that insurrection of the feelin carrying away upon their triumphant shoulders the Reas which has no longer power to guide them; for his intell did not derive its main momentum from his feelings. A hence it is that whereas the quality which first strikes us most poets is *sensibility*, with its caprices, infirmities, a generous errors; the first quality which strikes us in Goet

-the Child and Man, but *not* the Youth—is *intellect*, with its earness and calmness. He has also a provoking immunity om error. I say *provoking*, for we all gladly overlook the rrors of enthusiasm: some, because these errors appeal to ur compassion; and some, because these errors establish a mmunity of impulse between the sinner and ourselves, rming, as it were, broken edges which show us where to look r support—scars which tell of wounds we have escaped. Whereas, we are pitiless to the cold prudence which shames ur weakness and asks no alms from our charity. Why do we l preach Prudence, and secretly dislike it? Perhaps, because e dimly feel that life without its generous errors might want s lasting enjoyments; and thus the very mistakes which arise om an imprudent, unreflecting career, are absolved by that stinct which suggests other aims for existence beyond pru- ential aims. This is one reason why the erring lives of enius command such deathless sympathy.

Having indicated so much, I may now ask those who are istressed by the calm, self-sustaining superiority of Goethe in ld age, whether, on deeper reflection, they cannot reconcile with their conceptions of the poet's nature? We admire ationality, but we sympathise with Sensibility. Our dislike f the one arises from its supposed incompatibility with the ther. But if a man unites the mastery of Will and Intellect the profoundest sensibility of Emotion, shall we not say of im that he has in living synthesis vindicated both what we reach and what we love? That Goethe united these will be undantly shown in this Biography. In the chapters about follow we shall see him wild, restless, aimless, erring, and xtravagant enough to satisfy the most ardent admirer of the agabond nature of genius: the Child and the Man will at mes be scarcely traceable in the Youth.

One trait must not be passed over, namely, his *impatient susceptibility*, which, while it prevented his ever thoroughly astering the technic of any one subject, lay at the bottom of s multiplied activity in directions so opposed to each other. e was excessively impressible, caught the impulse from every rrounding influence, and was thus never constant to one ing, because his susceptibility was connected with an im atience which soon made him weary. There are men who arn many languages, and never thoroughly master the ammar of one. Of these was Goethe. Easily excited to row his energy in a new direction, he had not the patience

which begins at the beginning, and rises gradually, slowly int assured mastery. Like an eagle he swooped down upon hi prey; he could not watch for it, with cat-like patience. It i to this impatience we must attribute the fact of so man works being left fragments, so many composed by snatche during long intervals. *Prometheus*, *Mahomet*, *Die Natürlich Tochter*, *Elpenor*, *Achilleis*, *Nausikäa*, remain fragments. *Faus Egmont*, *Tasso*, *Iphigenia*, *Meister*, were many years in hand Whatever could be done in a few days—while the impuls lasted—was done; longer works were spread over a serie of years.

BOOK THE SECOND

1765 TO 1771

" In grossen Städten lernen früh
Die jüngsten Knaben was ;
Denn manche Bücher lesen sie
Und hören diess und dass ;
Vom Lieben und vom Küssen
Sie brauchen's nicht zu wissen ;
Und mancher ist im zwölften Jahr
Fast klüger als sein Vater war
Da er die Mutter nahm."

"Œser taught me that the Ideal of Beauty is Simplicity and Repose, and thence it follows that no youth can be a Master."

CHAPTER I

THE LEIPSIC STUDENT

N the month of October 1765, Goethe, aged sixteen, arrived Leipsic, to commence his collegiate life, and to lay, as he oped, the solid foundation of a future professorship. He ook lodgings in the Feuerkugel, between the Old and New Iarkets, and was by the rector of the University inscribed on ie 19th as student "in the Bavarian nation." At that period, nd until quite recently, the University was classed according four "Nations," viz., the *Misnian*, the *Saxon*, the *Bava-ian*, and the *Polish*. When the inscription was official, the nations" were what in Oxford and Paris are called "tongues"; hen not official, they were students' clubs, such as they exist this day. Goethe, as a Frankfurter, was placed in the avarian.[1]

If the reader has any vivid recollection of the Leipsic hapters in the *Autobiography*, let me beg him to dismiss them ith all haste from his mind; that very work records the ability of recalling the enchanting days of youth "with the mmed powers of an aged mind;" and it is evident that the lm narrative of his Excellency J. W. von Goethe very in-curately represents the actual condition of the raw, wild udent, just escaped from the paternal roof, with money which

[1] Otto Jahn, in the *Briefe an Leipziger Freunde*, p. 9.

seems unlimited in his purse, with the world before him whic
his genius is to open. His own letters, and the letters of h
friends, enable us "to read between the lines" of the *Aut*
biography, and to read there a very different account.

He first presented himself to Hofrath Böhme, a genuin
German professor, shut within the narrow circle of his spec
ality. To him, Literature and the Fine Arts were trivialitie
and when the confiding youth confessed his secret ambitio
of studying *belles lettres*, in lieu of the jurisprudence co
manded by his father, he met with every discouragement. Y
it was not difficult to persuade this impressible student th
to rival Otto and Heineccius was the true ambition of
vigorous mind. He set to work in earnest, at first, as studen
usually do on arriving at seats of learning. His attendance
the lectures on philosophy, history of law, and jurisprudenc
was assiduous enough to have pleased even his father. B
this flush of eagerness quickly subsided. Logic was invi
cibly repugnant to him. He hungered for realities, and cou
not be satisfied with definitions. To see operations of h
mind which, from childhood upwards, had been conducte
with perfect ease and unconsciousness, suddenly pulled
pieces, in order that he might gain the superfluous knowled
of what they were, and what they were called, was to hi
tiresome and frivolous. "I fancied I knew as much abo
God and the world as the professor himself, and logic seeme
in many places to come to a dead standstill." We are here
the threshold of that experience which has been immortalis
in the scene between Mephistopheles and the Student. Juri
prudence soon became almost equally tiresome. He alrea
knew as much law as the professor thought proper to co
municate; and what with the tedium of the lectures, and t
counter-attraction of delicious fritters, which used to co
"hot from the pan precisely at the hour of lecture," no wond
that volatile Sixteen soon abated attendance.

Volatile he was, wild, and somewhat rough, both in appe
ance and in speech. He had brought with him a wild, unea
spirit struggling towards the light. He had also brought wi
him the rough manners of Frankfurt, the strong Frankf
dialect and colloquialisms, rendered still more unfit for t
Leipsic salon by a mixture of proverbs and biblical allusio
Nay, even his costume was in unpleasant contrast with that
the society in which he moved. He had an ample wardro
but unhappily it was doubly out of fashion: it had been ma

ctured at home by one of his father's servants, and thus was ot only in the Frankfurt style, but grotesquely made in that yle. To complete his discomfiture, he saw a favourite low median throw an audience into fits of laughter by appearing the stage dressed precisely in that costume, which he had therto worn as the latest novelty! All who can remember e early humiliations of being far behind their companions in atters of costume, will sympathise with this youth. From ne of his letters written shortly after his arrival, we may tch a glimpse of him. "To-day I have heard two lectures: öhme on law, and Ernesti on Cicero's *Orator*. That'll do, ? Next week we have collegium philosophicum et mathematicum. I haven't seen Gottsched yet. He is married ain. She is nineteen and he sixty-five. She is four feet gh, and he seven feet. She is as thin as a herring, and he broad as a feathersack. I make a great figure here! But yet I am no dandy. I never shall become one. I need me skill to be industrious. In society, concerts, theatre, astings, promenades, the time flies. Ha! it goes gloriously. it also expensively. The devil knows how my purse feels Hold! rescue! stop! There go two louis d'or. Help! ere goes another. Heavens! another couple are gone. nce are here as farthings are with you. Nevertheless one n live cheaply here. So I hope to get off with two hundred alers—what do I say? with three hundred. N.B. Not cluding what has already gone to the devil."

Dissatisfied with College, he sought instruction elsewhere. the table where he dined daily, kept by Hofrath Ludwig e rector, he met several medical students. He heard little ked of but medicine and botany, and the names of Haller, nnæus, and Buffon were incessantly cited with respect. His ady quickness to interest himself in all that interested those ound him, threw him at once into these studies, which hereer he was to pursue with passionate ardour, but which at esent he only lightly touched. Another source of instruction aited him, one which through life he ever gratefully acknowlged, namely, the society of women.

> "Willst du genau erfahren was sich ziemt,
> So frage nur bei edlen Frauen an!"[1]

he speaks in *Tasso;* and here, in Leipsic, he was glad to

[1] "Wouldst clearly learn what the Becoming is, inquire of noble-minded men!"

learn from Frau Böhme not only some of the requisites fo society, but also some principles of poetic criticism. Thi delicate, accomplished woman was able to draw him int society, to teach him l'ombre and picquet, to correct some o his awkwardnesses, and lastly to make him own that the poe he admired were a deplorable set, and that his own imitation of them deserved no better fate than the flames. He ha got rid of his absurd wardrobe at one fell swoop, without murmur at the expense. He now had also to cast away th poetic wardrobe brought from home with so much pride. H saw that it was poetic frippery—saw that his own poem were lifeless; accordingly, a holocaust was made of all hi writings, prose and verse, and the kitchen fire wafted them int space.

But society became vapid to him at last. He was not a his ease. Cards never amused him, and poetical discussio became painful. "I have not written a long while," he write to his friend Riese. "Forgive me. Ask not after the cause It was not occupation, at all events. You live contented i Marburg; I live so here. Solitary, solitary, quite solitary Dear Riese, this solitude has awakened a certain sadness i my soul:—

It is my only pleasure,
Away from all the world,
To lie beside the streamlet,
And think of those I love.

But contented as I am, I still feel the want of old companion I sigh for my friends and my maiden, and when I feel that m sighs are vain,—

Then fills my heart with sorrow,—
My eye is dim;
The stream which softly passed me,
Roars now in storm.
No bird sings in the bushes,
The zephyr which refreshed me
Now storms from the north,
And whirls off the blossoms.
With tremor I fly from the spot,—
I fly, and seek in deserted streets
Sad solitude.

Yet how happy I am, quite happy! Horn has drawn me fro low spirits by his arrival. He wonders why I am so changed

He seeks to find the explanation,
Smiling thinks o'er it, looks me in the face;
But how can he find out my cause of grief?
I know it not myself.

ut I must tell you something of myself:

Quite other wishes rise within me now,
Dear friend, from those you have been wont to hear.
You know how seriously I wooed the Muse;
With what a hate I scorned those whom the Law
And not the Muses beckoned. And you know
How fondly I (alas! most falsely) hoped
The Muses loved me,—gave me gift of song!
My Lyre sounded many a lofty song,
But not the Muses, not Apollo sent them.
True, it is my pride made me believe
The Gods descended to me, and no Master
Produced more perfect works than mine!
No sooner came I here, than from my eyes
Fell off the scales, as I first learned to prize
Fame, and the mighty efforts fame required.
Then seemed to me my own ambitious flight
But as the agitation of a worm,
Who in the dust beholds the eagle soar,
And strives to reach him; strains every nerve,
Yet only agitates the dust he lies in.
Sudden the wind doth rise, and whirls the dust
In clouds, the worm is also raisèd with it:
Then the poor worm believes he has the wings
Of eagles, raising him too in the air!
But in another moment lulls the wind,
The cloud of dust drops gently on the ground,
And with the dust the worm, who crawls once more!

on't be angry with my galimathias. Good-bye. Horn will nish this letter."

Not only is this letter curious in its revelations of his state f mind, but the verses into which it spontaneously flows, and hich I have translated with more jealous fidelity to the mean- ıg than to poetical reproduction, show how among his friends e was even then regarded as a future poet. The confession ttered in the final verses, clearly owes its origin to Frau öhme's criticisms; but it is not every young poet who can e so easily discouraged. Even *his* discouragement could not st long. Schlosser, afterwards his brother-in-law, came to eipsic, and by his preaching and example once more roused ıe productive activity which showed itself in German, French, nglish, and Italian verses.

Schlosser, who was ten years his senior, not only awakened mulation by his own superior knowledge and facility, but rther aided him by introducing him to a set of literary iends, with whom poetic discussions formed the staple of onversation. This circle met at the house of one Schönkopf, *Weinhändler* and *Hauswirth*, living in the Brühl, No. 79.[1]

1 The house still stands there, but has been almost entirely remodelled.

To translate these words into English equivalents would onl mislead the reader. Schönkopf kept neither an hotel, nor public house, but what in Germany is a substitute for both He sold wine, and kept a *table d'hôte;* occasionally also le bedrooms to travellers. His wife, a lively, cultivated woman belonging to a good family in Frankfurt, drew Frankfurt visitor to the house; and with her Goethe soon became on terms o intimacy, which would seem surprising to the English reade who only heard of her as an innkeeper's wife. He becam one of the family, and fell in love with the daughter. I mus further beg the reader to understand that in Germany, to thi day, there is a wide difference between the dining customs an our own. The English student, clerk, or bachelor, who dine at an eating-house, chop-house, or hotel, goes there simply t get his dinner, and perhaps look at the *Times*. Of the othe diners he knows nothing, cares little. It is rare that a word interchanged between him and his neighbour. Quite othe wise in Germany. There the same society is generally to b found at the same table. The *table d'hôte* is composed of circle of *habitués*, varied by occasional visitors, who in tim become, perhaps, members of the circle. Even with strange conversation is freely interchanged; and in a little while friend ships are formed over these dinner tables, according as natur tastes and likings assimilate, which, extending beyond th mere hour of dinner, are carried into the current of lif Germans do not rise so hastily from the table as we; for tim with them is not so precious; life is not so crowded; time ca be found for quiet after-dinner talk. The cigars and coffe which appear before the cloth is removed, keep the compan together; and in that state of suffused comfort which qui digestion creates, they hear without anger the opinions antagonists. In such a society must we imagine Goethe the Schönkopf establishment, among students and men letters, all eager in advancing their own opinions, and con bating the false taste which was not their own.

To complete this picture, and to separate it still more fro our English customs, you must imagine host and hoste dining at the table, while their charming daughter, who ha cooked or helped to cook the dinner, brought them the win This daughter was the Anna Katharina, by intimates calle Käthchen, and by Goethe, in the *Autobiography*, designate as Annchen and Annette. Her portrait, still extant, is ve pleasing. She was then nineteen, lively, and loving; ho

ould she be insensible to the love of this glorious youth, in l the fervour of genius, and with all the attractions of beauty? hey saw each other daily, not only at dinner but in the venings, when he accompanied the piano of her brother by a eble performance on the flute. They also got up private eatricals, in which Goethe and Käthchen played the lovers. *Minna von Barnhelm*, then a novelty, was among the pieces erformed. That these performances were of a strictly amateur rder may be gathered from the fact that in one of them the art of a nightingale, which is important, was represented by a andkerchief, rolled up into such ornithological resemblance art could reach.

Two letters, quite recently discovered, have fallen into y hands; they give us a curious glimpse of him at this me, such as one may look for in vain in his own account himself, or in the accounts of any other writer. They e from his friend Horn, whose arrival he mentioned the letter previously quoted, and who was one of his ily companions in Frankfurt. The first is dated 12th of ugust 1766, and is addressed to one Moors, a Frankfurt mpanion.

"To speak of our Goethe! He is still the same proud, ntastic personage as when I came hither. If you only saw m, you would either be mad with anger or you would burst ith laughter. I cannot at all understand how a man can quickly transform himself. His manners and his whole earing, at present, are as different as possible from his former ehaviour. Over and above his pride, he is a dandy; and l his clothes, handsome as they are, are in so odd a taste at they make him conspicuous among all the students. But is is indifferent to him; one may remonstrate with him for s folly as much as one likes—

> Man mag Amphion seyn und Feld und Wald bezwingen,
> Nur keinen Goethe nicht kann man zur Klugheit bringen.[1]

ll his thought and effort is only to please himself and his dy-love. In every circle he makes himself more ridiculous an agreeable. Merely because the lady admires it, he has ut on tricks and gestures that one cannot possibly refrain

[1] "One may be Amphion and coerce the trees and rocks, but not bring oethe to his senses."

from laughing at. He has adopted a walk which is quit insufferable. If you only saw it!

'Il marche à pas comptés,
Comme une Recteur suivi des quatre Facultés.'

His society is every day more intolerable to me, and he, too tries to avoid me whenever he can. I am too plain a ma for him to walk across the street with me. What would th 'king of Holland' say if he saw him in this guise? Do writ again to him soon and tell him your opinion; else he and hi lady-love will remain as silly as ever. Heaven only preserv me, as long as I am here, from any sweetheart, for the wome here are the very devil. Goethe is not the first who has mad a fool of himself to please his Dulcinea. I only wish yo could see her just for once: she is the most absurd creatur in the world. Her *mine coquette avec un air hautain* is a with which she has bewitched Goethe. Dear friend! ho glad should I be if Goethe were still what he was in Frankfurt Good friends as we were formerly, we can now scarcely endur each other for a quarter of an hour. Yet with time I sti hope to convert him, though it is a hard matter to make coxcomb wise. But I will venture everything for the sak of it.

Ach! früchtete dies mein Bemühn!
Ach! könnt' ich meinen Zweck erreichen!
Ich wollt' nicht Luther, nicht Calvin,
Noch einem der Bekehrer weichen.[1]

I cannot write to him again what I have here told you. shall be delighted if you will do so. I care neither for hi anger nor for that of his lady-love. For, after all, he is no easily offended with me; even when we have quarrelled h sends for me next day. So much of him; more another tim

Live and forget not thy HORN."

Moors followed Horn's advice, and expressed to Goeth apparently in very plain terms, his astonishment and dissati faction at the disadvantageous change. In October of th same year, he received from Horn the following explanation

"But, dear Moors! how glad you will be to learn that w have lost no friend in our Goethe, as we falsely supposed He had so travestied himself as to deceive not only me b

[1] "Ah, if my attempt succeed, I should not envy Luther, Calvin, nor a other Converter."

great many others, and we should never have discovered the eal truth of the matter, if your letter had not threatened him vith the loss of a friend. I must tell you the whole story as ie himself told it to me, for he has commissioned me to do o in order to save him the trouble. He is in love, it is true— ie has confessed it to me, and will confess it to you; but his ove, though its circumstances are sad, is not culpable, as formerly supposed. He loves. But not that young lady vhom I suspected him of loving. He loves a girl beneath im in rank, but a girl whom—I think I do not say too much —you would yourself love if you saw her. I am no lover, so shall write entirely without passion. Imagine to yourself woman, well grown, though not very tall; a round, agreeable, hough not extraordinarily beautiful face; open, gentle, engag- ng manners; a very pretty understanding, without having ad any great education. He loves her very tenderly, with he perfect, honest intentions of a virtuous man, though he nows that she can never be his. Whether she loves him in eturn I know not. You know, dear Moors, that is a point bout which one cannot well ask; but this much I can say o you, that they seem to be born for each other. Now bserve his cunning! That no one may suspect him of such n attachment, he undertakes to persuade the world of recisely the opposite, and hitherto he has been extraordinarily uccessful. He makes a great parade, and seems to be paying ourt to a certain young lady of whom I have told you before. Ie can see his beloved and converse with her at certain times ithout giving occasion for the slightest suspicion, and I often ccompany him to her. If Goethe were not my friend I ould fall in love with her myself. Meanwhile he is supposed o be in love with the Fräulein —— (but what do you care bout her name?) and people are fond of teasing him about er. Perhaps she herself believes that he loves her, but the ood lady deceives herself. Since that time he has admitted ie to closer confidence, has made me acquainted with his ffairs, and shown me that his expenditure is not so great as ight be supposed. He is more of a philosopher and moralist an ever; and innocent as his love is, he nevertheless dis- pproves it. We often dispute about this, but let him take hat side he will, he is sure to win; for you know what weight e can give to only apparent reasons. I pitv him and his ood heart, which really must be in a very melancholy con- tion, since he loves the most virtuous and perfect of girls

without hope. But if we suppose that she loves him in return how miserable must he be on that very account! I need not explain that to you, who so well know the human heart. He has told me that he will write you one or two things about it himself. There is no necessity for me to recommend silence to you on this subject; for you yourself see how necessary it is. . . ."

Imagine this somewhat fantastic youth assured that his passion is returned, and then imagine him indulging in the boyish caprice of tormenting his beloved. There is nothing more cruel than youth; and youthful lovers, once assured of victory, are singularly prone to indulge in the most frivolous pretexts for ingeniously tormenting. "Man loves to conquer, likes not to feel secure," Goethe says, in the piece wherein he dramatised this early experience:

"Erringen will der Mensch; er will nicht sicher seyn."

Had Käthchen coquetted with him, keeping him in the exquisite pain of suspense, she would have been happier: but as he said in his little poem, *Der Wahre Genuss*, "she is perfect, and her only fault is—that she loves me":

Sie ist volkommen, und sie fehlet
Darin allein dass sie mich liebt.

He teased her with trifles and idle suspicions; was jealous without cause, convinced without reason; plagued her with fantastic quarrels, till at last her endurance was exhausted and her love was washed away in tears. No sooner was he aware of this, than he repented, and tried to recover the jewel which like a prodigal he had cast away. In vain. He was in despair, and tried in dissipation to forget his grief. A better issue was poetry. Several of his lyrics bore the burden of this experience; and one entire play, or pastoral, is devoted to a poetical representation of these lovers' quarrels: this is *Die Laune des Verliebten*, which is very curious as the earliest extant work of the great poet, and as the earliest specimen of his tendency to turn experience into song. In the opera of *Erwin und Elmire* he subsequently treated a similar subject, in a very different manner. The first effort is the more curious of the two. The style of composition is an imitation of those pastoral dramas, which, originated by Tasso and Guarini in the soft and almost luscious *Aminta* and

Pastor Fido, had by the French been made popular all over Europe.

Two happy and two unhappy lovers are somewhat artificially contrasted; the two latter representing Käthchen and the poet. Action there is none; the piece is made up of talk about love, some felicitous verses of the true stamp and ring, and an occasional glimpse of insight into the complexities of passion. Eridon, the jealous lover, torments his mistress in a style at once capricious and natural; with admirable truth he deplores his jealousy and excuses it:

> Zwar oft betrübt er mich, doch rührt ihn auch mein Schmerz.
> Wirft er mir etwas vor, fängt er mich au zu plagen,
> So darf ich nur ein Wort, ein gutes Wort nur sagen,
> Gleich ist er umgekehrt, die wilde Zanksucht flieht,
> Er weint sogar mit mir, wenn er mich weinen sieht.[1]

He is admirably said that the very absence of any cause for grief prompts him to create a grief:

Da er kein Elend hat, will er sich Elend machen.

Amine is also touched with a delicate pencil. Her lovingness, forgivingness, and endurance are from the life. Here is a couplet breathing the very tenderness of love:

> Der Liebe leichtes Band machst du zum schweren Joch.
> Du quälst mich als Tyrann; und ich? *ich lieb dich noch!*[2]

One more line and I have done: Eglé is persuading Eridon that Amine's love of dancing is no trespass on her love for him; since, after having enjoyed her dance, her first thought is to seek him:

Und durch das Suchen selbst wirst du ihr immer lieber.[3]

In such touches as these lurks the future poet; still more than in the very choice of the subject. Here, as ever, he does not cheat himself with pouring feigned sorrows into feigning verse: he embalms his own experience. He does not trouble himself with drawing characters and events from the shelves

[1] 'Tis true he vexes me, and yet my sorrow pains him.
Yet let him but reproach—begin to tease me,
Then need I but a word, a single kind word utter,
Away flies all his anger in a moment,
And he will weep with me, because he sees me weep.

[2] "The fairy link of Love thou mak'st a galling yoke.
Thou treat'st me as a slave; and I? I love thee still!"

[3] "And in the very search her heart grows fonder of thee."

of the library: his soul is the fountain of his inspiration. H own life was uniformly the text from which he preached. H sang what he had felt, and because he had felt it; not becaus others had sung before him. He was the echo of no man joys and sorrows, he was the lyrist of his own. This is th reason why his poems have an endless charm: they are as in destructible as passion itself. They reach our hearts becaus they issue from his. Every bullet hits the mark, according t the huntsman's superstition, if it have first been dipped in th marksman's blood.

He has told us, emphatically, that *all his works are bu fragments of the grand confession of his life.* Of him we ma say what Horace so well says of Lucilius, that he trusted hi secrets to books as to faithful friends:

> "Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
> Credebat libris; neque, si male cesserat, unquam
> Decurrens alio, neque si bene: *quo fit, ut omnis*
> *Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella*
> *Vita senis.*"[1]

How clearly he saw the nullity of every other procedure i shown in various passages of his letters and conversations Riemer has preserved one worth selecting: "There will soo be a poetry without poetry, a real ποίησις, where the subjec matter is ἐν ποιήσει, in the *making:* a manufactured poetry." He dates from Leipsic the origin of his own practice, whic he says was a tendency he never could deviate from all his life "namely, the tendency to transform into an image, a poem everything which delighted or troubled me, or otherwis occupied me, and to come to some distinct understandin with myself upon it, to set my inward being at rest." Th reason he gives for this tendency is very questionable. H attributes it to the isolation in which he lived with respect t matters of taste forcing him to look within for poetical subject But had not the tendency of his genius lain in that directio no such circumstances could have directed it.

Young, curious, and excitable as he was, nothing is mo natural than that he should somewhat shock the respect

[1] Sermon., lib. ii. 1.

[2] *Briefe von und an Goethe.* Herausgeg. von RIEMER. 1846. Wh follows is untranslatable, from the play on words: "Die Dichter heiss dann so, wie schon Moritz spasste, *a spissando, densando*, vom Dichtmache weil sie Alles zusammendrängen, und kommen mir vor wie eine Art Wurs macher, die in den Darm des Hexameters oder Trimeters ihre Wort- u Sylbenfülle stopfen."

lities by his pranks and extravagancies. His constant mpanion was Behrisch, one of the most interesting figures mong these Leipsic friends. With strongly-marked features nd a certain dry causticity of manner, always well dressed, nd always preserving a most staid demeanour, Behrisch was bout thirty years of age, and had an ineradicable love of fun nd mystification. He could treat trifles with an air of immense nportance. He would invent narratives about the perversity nd absurdity of others, in order to convulse his hearers with e unction of his philippics against such absurdity. He was nd of dissipation, into which he carried an air of supreme avity. He rather affected the French style of *politesse*, and oke the language well; and, above all, he had some shrewd od sense, as a buttress for all his follies. Behrisch introduced him to some damsels who "were better than their putation," and took him into scenes more useful to the ture poet than advantageous to the repute of the young ident. He also laughed him out of all respect for gods, ddesses, and other mythological inanities which still pressed eir heavy dulness on his verse; would not let him commit e imprudence of rushing into print, but calmed the author's nging, by beautifully copying his verses into a volume, adorn- them with vignettes. Behrisch was, so to speak, the ecursor of Merck; his influence not so great, but somewhat the same kind. The friends were displeased to see young oethe falling thus away from good society into such a disputable course; but just as Lessing before him had neglected e elegant Leipsic world for actors and authors of more wit n money, and preferred Mylius, with his shoes down at el, to all that the best drest society could offer; so did ung Goethe neglect salon and lecture-hall for the many-oured scene of life in less elegant circles. Enlightened by result, we foresee that the poet will receive little injury m these sources; he is gaining experience, and experience n of the worst sides of human nature will be sublimated o noble uses, as carrion by the wise farmer is turned into ellent manure. In this great drama of life every Theatre its Green-room; and unless the poet know how it is behind scenes he will never understand how actors speak and ve.

Goethe had often been "behind the scenes," looking at the leton which stands in almost every house. His adventure h Gretchen, and its consequences, early opened his eyes

to the strange gulfs which lie under the crust of society. "Religion, morals, law, rank, habits," he says, "rule over the *surface* of social life. Streets of magnificent houses are kept clean; every one outwardly conducts himself with propriety; but the disorder within is often only the more desolate, and a polished exterior covers many a wall which totters, and falls with a crash during the night, all the more terrible because it falls during a calm. How many families had I not more or less distinctly known in which bankruptcy, divorce, seduction, murder, and robbery had wrought destruction! Young as I was, I had often, in such cases, lent my succour; for as my frankness awakened confidence, and my discretion was known, and as my activity did not shun any sacrifice—indeed, rather preferred the most perilous occasions—I had frequently to mediate, console, and try to avert the storm; in the course of which I could not help learning many sad and humiliating facts."

It was natural that such sad experience should at first lead him to view the whole social fabric with contempt. To relieve himself he—being then greatly captivated with Molière's works—sketched the plans of several dramas, but their plots were so uniformly unpleasant, and the catastrophes so tragic, that he did not work out these plans. "The Fellow Sinners" (*Die Mitschuldigen*), is the sole piece which was completed, and it now occupies a place among his writings. Few, in England at least, ever read it; yet it is worth a rapid glance, and is especially remarkable as the work of a youth not yet eighteen. It is lively, and strong with effective situations and two happily sketched characters,—Söller, the scampish husband, and his father-in-law, the inquisitive landlord. The plot is briefly this: Söller's wife—before she became his wife—loved a certain Alcest; and her husband's conduct is not such as to make her forget her former lover, who, at the opening of the play, is residing in her father's hotel. Alcest prevails upon her to grant him an interview in his own room while her husband, Söller, is at the masquerade. Unluckily Söller has determined to rob Alcest that very night. He enters the room by stealth—opens the escritoire—takes the money—is alarmed by a noise—hides himself in an alcove, and then sees his father-in-law, the landlord, enter the room. The old man, unable to resist a burning curiosity to know the contents of a letter which Alcest has received that day, has come to read it in secret. But he in turn is alarmed by the

ppearance of his daughter, and, letting the candle fall, he scapes. Söller is now the exasperated witness of an interiew between Alcest and his wife: a situation which, like ie whole of the play, is a mixture of the ludicrous and the ainful—very dramatic and very unpleasant.

On the following day the robbery is discovered. Sophie inks the robber is her father; he returns her the compliment -nay, more, stimulated by his eager curiosity, he consents to form Alcest of his suspicion in return for the permission to ad the contents of the mysterious letter. A father sacrificing s daughter to gratify a paltry curiosity is too gross; it is the ly trait of juvenility in the piece—a piece otherwise preaturely old. Enraged at such an accusation, Sophie retorts e charge upon her father, and some unamiable altercations sult. The piece winds up by the self-betrayal of Söller, who, timating to Alcest that he was present during a certain octurnal interview, shields himself from punishment. The oral is—"Forget and forgive among fellow sinners."

CHAPTER II

MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

HE two dramatic works noticed towards the close of the last apter, may be said to begin the real poetic career of their thor, because in them he drew from his actual experience. ey will furnish us with a text for some remarks on his culiar characteristics, the distinct recognition of which will ilitate the comprehension of his life and writings. We make digression, but the reader will find that in thus swerving from direct path of narrative, we are only tacking to fill our sails h wind.

Frederick Schlegel (and after him Coleridge) aptly indicated distinction, when he said that every man was born either a tonist or an Aristotelian. This distinction is often expressed the terms *subjective* and *objective* intellects. Perhaps we shall st define these by calling the objective intellect one which is inently *impersonal*, and the subjective intellect one which is inently *personal*; the former disengaging itself as much as ssible from its own prepossessions, striving to see and resent objects as they exist; the other viewing all objects in

the light of its own feelings and preconceptions. It is nee
less to add that no mind can be exclusively objective, n
exclusively subjective; but every mind has a more or l
dominant tendency in one of these directions. We see t
contrast in Philosophy, as in Art. The realist argues fr
Nature upwards, argues inductively, starting from reality, a
never long losing sight of it; even in the adventurous flig
of hypothesis and speculation, being desirous that his hy
thesis shall correspond with realities. The idealist arg
from an Idea downwards, argues deductively, starting fr
some conception, and seeking in realities only visible illust
tions of a deeper existence. The achievements of mode
Science, and the masterpieces of Art, prove that the grandi
generalisations and the most elevated types can only be reach
by the former method; and that what is called the "id
school," so far from having the superiority which it clai
is only more lofty in its *pretensions;* the realist, with m
modest pretensions, achieves loftier results. The Object
and Subjective, or, as they are also called, the Real and Ide
are thus contrasted as the termini of two opposite lines
thought. In Philosophy, in Morals, and in Art, we see
constant antagonism between these two principles. Thus
Morals the Platonists are those who seek the highest moral
out of human nature, instead of in the healthy development
all human tendencies, and their due co-ordination; they ho
in the *suppression* of integral faculties, to attain some sup
human standard. They call that Ideal which no Reality c
reach, but for which we should strive. They superpose
extra, instead of trying to develop *ab intra*. They draw fr
their own minds, or from the dogmas handed to them by tra
tion, an arbitrary mould, into which they attempt to fuse
organic activity of Nature.

If this school had not in its favour the imperious instinct
progress, and aspirations after a better, it would not hold
ground. But it satisfies that craving, and thus deludes ma
minds into acquiescence. The poetical and enthusiastic c
position most readily acquiesces: preferring to overlook wh
man *is*, in its delight of contemplating what the poet mak
him. To such a mind all conceptions of man must have
halo round them,—half mist, half sunshine; the hero must
a Demigod, in whom no *valet de chambre* can find a failin
the villain must be a Demon, for whom no charity can find
excuse.

Not to extend this to a dissertation, let me at once say at Goethe belonged to the *objective* class. "Everywhere in oethe," says Franz Horn, "you are on firm land or island; where the infinite sea." A better characterisation was never itten in one sentence. In every page of his works may be ad a strong feeling for the real, the concrete, the living; and repugnance as strong for the vague, the abstract, or the persensuous. His constant striving was to study Nature, so to see her *directly*, and not through the mists of fancy, or rough the distortions of prejudice,—to look at men, and *into* em,—to apprehend things as they were. In his conception the universe he could not separate God *from* it, placing Him ove it, beyond it, as the philosophers did who represented od whirling the universe round His finger, "seeing it go." ch a conception revolted him. He animated the universe h God; he animated fact with divine life; he saw in Reality e incarnation of the Ideal; he saw in Morality the high and rmonious action of all human tendencies; he saw in Art the ghest representation of Life. If we look through his works h critical attention, we shall observe the *concrete* tendency termining—first, his choice of subjects; secondly, his hand- g of character; and, thirdly, his style. Intimately connected h this concreteness is that other characteristic of his genius, ich determined his *creative impulses only in alliance with otions he himself had experienced*. His imagination was not, e that of many others, incessantly at work in the combination d recombination of images, which could be accepted for ir own sake, apart from the warrant of preliminary con- ntation with fact. It demanded the confrontation; it moved h ease only on the secure ground of Reality. In like nner we see that in science there are men whose active iginations carry them into hypothesis and speculation, all more easily because they do not bring hypothesis to the n test of fact. The mere delight in combining ideas suffices m; provided the deductions are *logical*, they seem almost ifferent to their *truth*. There are poets of this order; eed most poets are of this order. Goethe was of a quite osite tendency. In him, as in the man of science, an erious desire for reality controlled the errant facility of gination. "The first and last thing demanded of Genius," says, "is love of truth."

Hence we see why he was led to portray men and women ead of demigods and angels; no Posas and Theklas, but

Egmonts and Clärchens. Hence also his portraitures can their moral *with* them, *in* them, but have no moral supe posed—no accompanying verdict as from some outstandi judge. Further,—and this is a point to be insisted on,- his style, both in poetry and prose, is subject to the same la It is vivid with pictures, but it has scarcely any imagery. Mo poets describe objects by metaphors or comparisons; Goet seldom tells you what an object is *like*, he tells you what it Shakspeare is very unlike Goethe in this respect. The pr digal luxuriance of his imagery often entangles, in its ov growth, the movement of his verse. It is true, he also eminently concrete: he sees the real object vividly, and makes us see it vividly; but he scarcely ever paints it save the colours of metaphor and simile. Shakspeare's imag bubbles up like a perpetual spring: to say that it repeated *overflows*, is only to say that his mind was lured by its o sirens away from the direct path. He did not master Pegasus at all times, but let the wild careering creature take winged way. Goethe, on the contrary, always masters h perhaps because his steed had less of restive life in its vei Not only does he master it, and ride with calm assured grac he seems so bent on reaching the goal, that he scarcely thin of anything else. To quit metaphor, he may be said to u with the utmost sparingness all the aids of imagery, and create images of the objects, rather than images of what t objects are like.

Shakspeare, like Goethe, was a decided realist. He, to was content to let his pictures of life carry their own mo with them. He uttered no moral verdict; he was no Cho preaching on the text of what he pictured. Hence we cann gather from his works what were his opinions. But there this difference between him and Goethe, that his intense sy pathy with the energetic passions and fierce volitions of race made him delight in heroic characters, in men of rob frames and impassioned lives. Goethe, with an infusion the best blood of Schiller, would have been a Shakspea but, such as Nature made him he was—not Shakspeare.

Turning from these abstract considerations to the t earliest works which form our text, we observe how youth is determined in the choice of his subject by realistic tendency. Instead of ranging through the enchan gardens of Armida—instead of throwing himself back i

e distant Past, thus escaping from the trammels of a modern bject, which the confrontation of reality always makes more fficult, this boy fashions into verse his own experience, his vn observation. He looks into his own heart,—he peers to the byways of civilisation, walking with curious observa- on through squalid streets and dark fearful alleys. Singular, oreover, is the absence of any fierce indignation, any cry of in at the sight of so much corruption underlying the surface society. In youth the loss of illusions is generally followed a cynical misanthropy, or a vehement protest. But Goethe neither cynical nor indignant. He seems to accept the ct as a thing to be admitted, and quietly striven against, th a view to its amelioration. He seems to think with the unger Pliny, that indulgence is a part of justice, and would e with approval the favourite maxim of the austere yet mane Thraseas, *qui vitia odit homines odit*,—he who hates es hates mankind.[1] For in the *Mitschuldigen* he presents with a set of people whose consolation is to exclaim, Rogues all!"—and in after years he wrote of this piece, that vas dictated, though unconsciously, by "far-sighted tolerance the appreciation of moral actions, as expressed in the emi- ntly Christian sentence, '*Let him who is without sin among cast the first stone.*'"

CHAPTER III

ART STUDIES

AU BÖHME died. In her he lost a monitress and friend, o had kept some check on his waywardness, and drawn him o society. The Professor had long since cooled towards him, r giving up all hopes of making him another Heineccius. was pitiful. A youth with such remarkable dispositions, o would *not* be assiduous in attendance at lecture, and whose usement during lecture was to sketch caricatures of various dignitaries in his notebook; another ornament to juris- dence irrecoverably lost! Indeed, the collegiate aspect of s Leipsic residence is not one promising to professors; but —instructed by the result—know how much better he was

[1] PLINY, *Epist.* lib. viii. 22. After the text was written, SCHÖLL published the's notebook kept at Strasburg, wherein may be read this very aphorism scribed. It was just the sort of passage to captivate him.

employed, than if he had filled a hundred volumes of no books by diligent attendance at lecture. He studied much, a desultory manner; he studied Molière and Corneille; began to translate *Le Menteur*. The theatre was a perpetu attraction; and even the uneasy, unsatisfied condition of l affections, was instructing him in directions whither no p fessor could lead him. But greater than all was the influen of Shakspeare, whom he first learned a little of through Dod *Beauties of Shakspeare*, a work not much prized in Englan where the plays form part of our traditional education, b which must have been a revelation to the Germans, somethi analogous to what Charles Lamb's *Specimens of the Old Engl Drama* was to us. The marvellous strength and beauty language, the bold and natural imagery of these *Beauti* startled the young poets of that day, like the discovery of hu fossil remains of some antediluvian fauna; and to gratify t curiosity thus awakened, he says there came Wieland's pro translation of several plays, which he studied with enthusiasm

There are no materials to fill up the gaps of his narrative he so that I am forced to leave much indistinct. For instance, has told us that Käthchen and he were no longer lovers; b we find him writing to her in a friendly and even lover-li tone from Frankfurt, and we know that friendly intercou still subsisted between them. Of this, however, not a wo occurs in the *Autobiography*. Nor are we accurately inform how he made the acquaintance of the Breitkopf family. Bre kopf was a bookseller in Leipsic, in whose house Literatu and Music were highly prized. Bernhard, the eldest son, v an excellent performer, and composed music to Goethe's son which were published in 1769, under this title: *Neue Lieder Melodieen gesetzt von Bernhard Theodor Breitkopf.* The p is not named. This *Liederbuch* contains twenty songs, t majority of which were subsequently reprinted in the poe works. They are love songs, and contain a love-philosop more like what is to be found in Catullus, Horace, and Wiela than what one would expect from a boy, did we not rememl how the braggadocio of youth delights in expressing *roué* sen ments, as if to give itself airs of profound experience. T youth sings with gusto of inconstancy:

Da fühl ich die Freuden der wechselden Lust.

[1] It is possible that Wieland's translation only then fell into Goethe's han but the publication was commenced before his arrival in Leipzig, namely in 17

le gaily declares that if one mistress leaves you another will ve you, and the second is sweeter to kiss than the first:

> Es küsst sich so süsse der Busen der Zweiten,
> Als kaum sich der Busen der Ersten geküsst.

Another acquaintance, and one more directly influential, was at of Œser, the director of the Drawing Academy. He had een the friend and teacher of Winckelmann, and his name ood high among connoisseurs. Goethe, who at home had arned a little drawing, joined Œser's class, where, among her fellow-students, was the Hardenberg who afterwards ade such a noise in the Prussian political world. He joined e class, and did his best to acquire by labour the skill which ly a talent can acquire. That he made little progress in awing, we learn from his subsequent confession, no less than m his failure; but tuition had this effect at least—it taught m to use his eyes. In a future chapter[1] I shall have occasion enter more fully on this subject. Enough if for the present sentence or two from his letters tell us the enthusiasm Œser spired. "What do I not owe to you," he writes to him, or having pointed out to me the way of the True and the autiful!" and concludes by saying, "the undersigned is your rk!" Writing to a friend of Œser's, he says that Œser nds beside Shakspeare and Wieland in the influence exer- ed over him. "His instruction will influence my whole life. e it was who taught me that the Ideal of Beauty is Simplicity d Repose, and thence it follows that no youth can be a ster."

Instruction in the theory of Art he gained from Œser, from nckelmann, and from *Laokoon*, the incomparable little book ich Lessing at this period carelessly flung upon the world. effect upon Goethe can only be appreciated by those who ly in life have met with this work, and risen from it with nds widened, strengthened, and inspired.[2] It opened a hway amid confusion, throwing light upon many of the scurest problems which torment the artist. It awakened in ethe an intense yearning to see the works of ancient masters; d these beckoned from Dresden. To Dresden he went. t here, in spite of Œser, Winckelmann, and Lessing, in

[1] See Book V. ch. v.

[2] Macaulay told me that the reading of this little book formed an epoch in mental history, and that he learned more from it than he had ever learned where.

spite of grand phrases about Art, the invincible tendency of his nature asserted itself, and instead of falling into rapture with the great Italian pictures, he confesses that he took the merits upon trust, and was really charmed by none but the landscape and Dutch painters, whose subjects appealed directly to his experience. He did not feel the greatness of Italian Art; and what he did not feel he would not feign.

It is worth noticing that this trip to Dresden was taken in absolute secrecy. As, many years later, he stole away to Italy without letting his friends even suspect his project, so now he left Leipsic for Dresden without a word of intimation. Probably the same motive actuated him in both instances. He went to see, to enjoy, to learn, and did not want to be disturbed by personal influence—by other people's opinions.

On his return he was active enough with drawing. He made the acquaintance of an engraver named Stock,[1] and with his usual propensity to try his hand at whatever his friends were doing, he forthwith began to learn engraving. In the *Morgenblatt* for 1828 there is a detailed account of two of his engravings, both representing landscapes with small cascades shut in by rocks and grottoes; at the foot of each are these words: *peint par A. Theile, gravé par Goethe.* One plate is dedicated *à Monsieur Goethe, Conseillier actuel de S. M. Impériale, par son fils très obéissant.* In the room which they show to strangers in his house in Frankfurt, there is also a specimen of his engraving—very amateurish; but Madame von Goethe showed me one in her possession which really has merit.

Melancholy, wayward, and capricious, he allowed Lessing to pass through Leipsic without making any attempt to see the man he so much admired: a caprice he afterwards repented for the opportunity never recurred. Something of his hypochondria was due to mental, but more to physical causes. Dissipation, bad diet (especially the beer and coffee), and absurd endeavours to carry out Rousseau's preaching about returning to a state of nature, had seriously affected his health. The crisis came at last. One summer night (1768) he was seized with violent hæmorrhage. He had only strength enough to call to his aid the fellow-student who slept in the next room. Medical assistance promptly came. He was saved; but his convalescence was embittered by the discovery of a tumour on his neck, which lasted some time. His recovery was slow

[1] This Stock had two amiable daughters, one of whom married (17[illegible] Körner, the correspondent of Schiller, and father of the poet.

ut it seemed as if it relieved him from all the peccant humours hich had made him hypochondriacal, leaving behind an in- ard lightness and joyousness to which he had long been a ranger. One thing greatly touched him—the sympathy ex- ressed for him by several eminent men; a sympathy he felt be quite undeserved, for there was not one among them hom he had not vexed or affronted by his caprices, extrava- nces, morbid opposition, and stubborn persistence.

One of these friends, Langer, not only made an exchange books with him, giving a set of Classic authors for a set of erman, but also, in devout yet not dogmatic conversation, d his young friend to regard the Bible in another light than at of a merely human composition. "I loved the Bible and lued it, for it was almost the only book to which I owed my oral culture. Its events, dogmas, and symbols were deeply pressed on my mind." He therefore felt little sympathy th the Deists who were at this time agitating Europe; and hough his tendency was strongly against the Mystics, he s afraid lest the poetical spirit should be swept away along th the prophetical. In one word, he was in a state of re- ious doubt—"destitute of faith, yet terrified at scepticism." This unrest and this bodily weakness he carried with him, ptember 1768, from Leipsic to Frankfurt, whither we will low him.

CHAPTER IV

RETURN HOME

e returned home a boy in years, in experience a man. oken in health, unhappy in mind, with no strong impulses any one direction, uncertain of himself and of his aims, felt, as he approached his native city, much like a repentant odigal, who has no vision of the fatted calf awaiting him. s father, unable to perceive the real progress he had made, s very much alive to the slender prospect of his becoming a tinguished jurist. The fathers of poets are seldom gratified h the progress in education visible to them; and the reason that they do not know their sons to be poets, nor under- nd that the poet's orbit is not the same as their own. They ad the common highway on which the milestones accurately rk distances; and seeing that their sons have trudged but

little way according to this measurement, their minds filled with misgivings. Of that silent progress, which consi less in travelling on the broad highway, than in developm of the limbs which will make a sturdy traveller, parents can judge.

Mother and sister, however, touched by the worn face, a woman-like, more interested in the man than what he h achieved, received him with an affection which compensa for his father's coldness. There is quite a pathetic glim given of this domestic interior in the *Autobiography*, wh he alludes to his father's impatience at his illness, and anxi for his speedy recovery. And we gladly escape from t picture to the Letters written from Frankfurt to his old lo Käthchen Schönkopf.[1] It appears that he left Leipsic with saying adieu. He thus refers to it:

"Apropos, you will forgive me that I did not take leave you. I was in the neighbourhood, I was even below at door; *I saw the lamp burning and went to the steps, but I h not the courage to mount.* For the last time—how should have come down again?

"Thus I now do what I ought to have done then: I tha you for all the love and friendship which you have constan shown me, and which I shall never forget. I need not b you to remember me,—a thousand occasions will arise wh must remind you of a man who for two years and a half v part of your family, who indeed often gave you cause for d pleasure, but still was always a good lad, and whom it is to hoped you will often miss; at least, I often miss you."

The tumour on his neck became alarming: the more so the surgeons, uncertain about its nature, were wavering their treatment. Frequent cauterisation, and constant co finement to his room, were the worst parts of the cure. read, drew, and etched to wile away the time; and by end of the year was pronounced recovered. This letter Käthchen announces the recovery.

"My best, anxious Friend,—You will doubtless ha heard from Horn, on the new year, the news of my recove and I hasten to confirm it. Yes, dear friend, it is over, a in future you must take it quietly, even if you hear—he laid up again! You know that my constitution often mal a slip, and in a week gets on its legs again; this time it v

[1] Printed in *Goethe's Briefe an seine Leipziger Freunde.* Herausgegeben Otto Jahn.

d, and seemed yet worse than it was, and was attended th terrible pains. Misfortune is also a good. I have learned uch in illness which I could have learned nowhere else in e. It is over, and I am quite brisk again, though for three nole weeks I have not left my room, and scarcely any one s visited me but my doctor, who, thank God! is an amiable an! An odd thing it is in us men: when I was in lively ciety I was out of spirits, now I am forsaken by all the rld I am cheerful; for even throughout my illness my eerfulness has comforted my family, who were not in a ndition to comfort themselves, to say nothing of me. The w year's song which you have also received, I composed ring an attack of great foolery, and had it printed for the ke of amusement. Besides this, I draw a great deal, write es, and am contented with myself. God give me, this new ar, what is good for me; may He do the same for all of us, d if we pray for nothing more than this, we may certainly pe that He will give it us. If I can only get along till April, hall easily reconcile myself to my condition. Then I hope ngs will be better; in particular my health may make pro- ss daily, because it is now known precisely what is the tter with me. My lungs are as sound as possible, but there something wrong at the stomach. And, in confidence, I ve had hopes given me of a pleasant, enjoyable mode of life, that my mind is quite cheerful and at rest. As soon as I better again I shall go away into foreign countries, and it st depend only on you and another person how soon I shall Leipsic again; in the meantime I think of going to France see what French life is, and learn the French language. So can imagine what a charming man I shall be when I urn to you. It often occurs to me, that it would be a ghable affair, if, in spite of all my projects, I were to die ore Easter. In that case I would order a gravestone for self in Leipsic churchyard, that at least every year on St. nn's day you might visit the figure of St. John and my grave. hat do you think?"

To celebrate his recovery, Rath Moritz gave a great party, which all the Frankfurt friends assembled. In a little while, wever, another illness came to lay the poet low; and, worse n all, there came the news from Leipsic that Käthchen was gaged to a Dr. Kanne, whom Goethe had introduced to her. is for ever decided his restlessness about her. Here is a er from him.

"My dear, my beloved Friend,—A dream last night ha reminded me that I owe you an answer. Not that I ha entirely forgotten it,—not that I never think of you: no, m dear friend, every day says something to me of you and c my faults. But it is strange, and it is an experience whic perhaps you also know, the remembrance of the absen though not extinguished by time, is veiled. The distraction of our life, acquaintance with new objects, in short, ever change in our circumstances, do to our hearts what smok and dirt do to a picture,—they make the delicate touche quite undiscernible, and in such a way that one does nc know how it comes to pass. A thousand things remind m of you; I see your image a thousand times, but as faintl and often with as little emotion, as if I thought of some on quite strange to me; it often occurs to me that I owe you a answer, without my feeling the slightest impulse to write t you. Now, when I read your kind letter, which is alread some months old, and see your friendship and your solicitud for one so unworthy, I am shocked at myself, and for the firs time feel what a change has taken place in my heart, tha I can be without joy at that which formerly would have lifte me up to heaven. Forgive me this! Can one blame an un fortunate man because he is unable to rejoice? My wretched ness has made me dead to the good which still remains to m My body is restored, but my mind is still uncured. I am i dull, inactive repose; that is not happiness. And in th quietude my imagination is so stagnant, that I can no longe picture to myself what was once dearest to me. It is only a dream that my heart often appears to me as it is,—only dream is capable of recalling to me the sweet images, of s recalling them as to reanimate my feelings; I have alread told you that you are indebted to a dream for this letter. saw you, I was with you; how it was, is too strange for me relate to you. In one word, you were married. Is that true I took up your kind letter, and it agrees with the time; if it true, O may that be the beginning of your happiness!

"When I think of this disinterestedly, how does it rejoic me to know that you, my best friend, you, before every oth who envied you and fancied herself better than you, are in th arms of a worthy husband; to know that you are happy, an freed from every annoyance to which a single state, an especially your single state, was exposed! I thank my drea that it has vividly depicted your happiness to me, and t

happiness of your husband, and his reward for having made you happy. Obtain me his friendship in virtue of your being my friend, for you must have all things in common, even including friends. If I may believe my dream we shall see each other again, but I hope not so very quickly, and for my part I shall try to defer its fulfilment. If, indeed, a man can undertake anything in opposition to destiny. Formerly I wrote to you somewhat enigmatically about what was to become of me. Now I may say more plainly that I am about to change my place of residence, and move farther from you. Nothing will my more remind me of Leipsic, except, perhaps, a restless dream; no friend who comes from thence; no letter. And yet I perceive that this will be no help to me. Patience, time, and distance will do that which nothing else can do; they will annihilate every unpleasant impression, and give us back our friendship, with contentment, with life, so that after a series of years we may see each other again with altogether different eyes, but with the same heart. Within a quarter of a year you shall have another letter from me, which will tell you of my destination and the time of my departure, and which can once more say to superfluity what I have already said a thousand times. I entreat you not to answer me any more; if you have anything more to say to me, let me know it through a friend. That is a melancholy entreaty, my best! you, the only one of all her sex, whom I cannot call friend, for that is an insignificant title compared with what I feel. I wish not to see your writing again, just as I wish not to hear your voice; it is painful enough for me that my dreams are so busy. You shall have one more letter; that promise I will sacredly keep, and so pay a part of my debts; the rest you must forgive me."

To round off this story, the following extract may be given from the last letter which has been preserved of those he wrote to her. It is dated Frankfurt, January 1770.

"That I live peaceably is all that I can say to you of myself, and vigorously, and healthily, and industriously, for I have no woman in my head. Horn and I are still good friends, but, as it happens in the world, he has his thoughts and ways, and I have my thoughts and ways, and so a week passes and we scarcely see each other once. But, everything considered, I am at last tired of Frankfurt, and at the end of March I shall have it. I must not yet go to you, I perceive; for if I came at Easter you could not be married. And Käthchen Schön

kopf I will not see again, if I am not to see her otherwise tha so. At the end of March, therefore, I go to Strasburg; you care to know that, as I believe you do. Will you wri to me to Strasburg also? You will play me no trick. Fa Käthchen Schönkopf, now I know perfectly that a letter fro you is as dear to me as from any hand in the world. Yo were always a sweet girl and will be a sweet woman. And I shall remain Goethe. You know what that means. If name my name, I name my whole self, and you know that long as I have known you I have lived only as part of you."

So fall away the young blossoms of love which have not t force to ripen into fruit. "The most lovable heart," he writ to Käthchen, with a certain bit of humour, "is that whic loves the most readily; but that which easily loves also easi forgets." It was his case; he could not be happy witho some one to love; but his mobile nature soon dried the tea wrung from him by her loss.

Turning once more to his domestic condition, we find hi in cold, unpleasant relations with his father, who had almo excited the hatred of his other child, Cornelia, by the ster pedantic, pedagogic way in which he treated her. The o man continued to busy himself with writing his travels Italy, and with instructing his daughter. She, who was of restless, excitable, almost morbid disposition, secretly rebell against his tyranny, and made her brother the confidant of her griefs. The poor mother had a terrible time of it, tryi to pacify the children, and to stand between them and the father.

Very noticeable is one detail recorded by him. He h fallen ill again; this time with a stomach disorder, which therapeutic treatment in the power of Frankfurt medici seemed to mitigate. The family physician was one of tho duped dupers who still clung to the great promises of Alchem It was whispered that he had in his possession a marvello panacea, which was only to be employed in times of greate need, and of which, indeed, no one dared openly speak. Fr Aja, trembling for her son, besought him to employ this m terious salt. He consented. The patient recovered, and bel in the physician's skill became more complete. Not only w the poet thus restored once more to health, he was al thereby led to the study of Alchemy, and, as he narrat employed himself in researches after the "virgin earth." the little study of that house in the *Hirsch-graben*, he collect

his glasses and retorts, and following the directions of authorities, sought, for a time, to penetrate the mystery which then seemed so penetrable. It is characteristic of his ardent curiosity and volatility that he should have now devoted the long hours of study to works such as Welling's *Opus Mago-cabbalisticum et Theosophicum*, and the unintelligible mystifications and diatribes of Paracelsus. He also tried Van Helmont (an interesting though fantastic writer), Basil Valentine, and other Alchemists. These, however, must quickly have been laid aside. They were replaced by the "Compendium" and the "Aphorisms" of Boerhaave, who at that period filled Europe with the sound of his name.[1] Goethe's studies of these writings were valuable as preparations for *Faust;* and were not without influence on his subsequent career in science.

Renewed intercourse with Fräulein von Klettenberg, together with much theological and philosophical reading, brought Religion into prominence in his thoughts. He has given a sketch of the sort of Neoplatonic Christianity into which his thoughts moulded themselves; but as this sketch was written so very many years after the period to which it relates, one cannot well accept its authenticity. For biographic purposes it is enough to indicate that, beside these Alchemic studies, Religion rose also into serious importance. Poetry seemed quite to have deserted him, although he still occasionally touched up his two plays. In a letter he humorously exposes the worthlessness of the *Bardenpoesie*, then in fashion among versifiers, who tried to be patriotic and Tyrtæan by huddling together golden helmets, flashing swords, the tramp of horses, and when the verse went lame for want of a syllable, supplying an *Oh!* or *Ha!* "Make me feel," he says, "what I have not yet felt,—make me think what I have not yet thought, then I will praise you. But shrieks and noise will never supply the place of pathos."

Paoli, the Corsican Patriot, passed through Frankfurt at this time, and Goethe saw him in the house of Bethmann, the rich merchant; but, with this exception, Frankfurt presented nothing remarkable to him, and he was impatient to escape from it. His health was sufficiently restored for his father to hope that now Jurisprudence could be studied with some

[1] So little can contemporary verdicts settle an author's position, that Boerhaave, whose "Institutions" were thought worthy of a Commentary in seven quartos by the great Haller, and whose "Aphorisms" were expanded into five quartos by the illustrious Von Swieten, is now nothing but a name.

success; and Strasburg was the university selected for that purpose.

CHAPTER V

STRASBURG

He reached Strasburg on the 2nd April 1770. He was now turned twenty, and a more magnificent youth never, perhaps, entered the Strasburg gates. Long before celebrity had fixed all eyes upon him he was likened to an Apollo; and once when he entered a dining-room, people laid down their knives and forks to stare at the beautiful youth. Pictures and busts, even when most resembling, give but a feeble indication of that which was most striking in his appearance; they give the form of features, but not the play of features; nor are they very accurate as to the form. His features were large and liberally cut, as in the fine sweeping lines of Greek art. The brow was lofty and massive, and from beneath it shone large lustrous brown eyes of marvellous beauty, their pupils being of almost unexampled size. The slightly aquiline nose was large, and well cut. The mouth was full, with a short, arched upper lip, very sensitive and expressive. The chin and jaw boldly proportioned; and the head rested on a handsome and muscular neck.

In stature he was rather above the middle size; but although not really tall, he had the aspect of a tall man, and is usually so described, because his presence was very imposing. His frame was strong, muscular, yet sensitive. Dante says this contrast is in the nature of things, for—

> "Quanta la cosa è più perfetta,
> Più senta 'l bene, e così la doglienza."

Excelling in all active sports, he was almost a barometer in sensitiveness to atmospheric influences.

Such, externally, was the youth who descended at the hotel *zum Geist*, in Strasburg, this 2nd April, and who, ridding himself of the dust and *ennui* of a long imprisonment in the diligence, sallied forth to gaze at the famous cathedral, which made a wonderful impression on him as he came up to it

[1] Rauch, the sculptor, who made the well-known statuette of Goethe, explained this to me as owing to his large bust and erect carriage.

through the narrow streets. The Strasburg Cathedral not inaptly serves as the symbol of his early German tendencies; and its glorious tower is always connected, in my mind, with the brief but ardent endeavours of his Hellenic nature to throw itself into the old German world. German his spirit was not, but we shall see him, under the shadow of this tower, for a moment inspired with true German enthusiasm.

His lodgings secured—No. 80, on the south side of the Fishmarket—he delivered his letters of introduction, and arranged to dine at a *table d'hôte* kept by two maiden ladies, named Lauth, in the Krämergasse, No. 13. The guests here were about ten in number, mostly medical. Their president was Dr. Salzmann, a clean old bachelor of eight and forty, scrupulous in his stockings, immaculate as to his shoes and buckles, with hat under his arm, and scarcely ever on his head—a neat, dapper, old gentleman, well instructed, and greatly liked by the poet, to whom he gave excellent advice, and for whom he found a valuable *repetent*.[1] In spite of the services of this excellent repetent, jurisprudence wearied him considerably, according to his account; at first, however, he seems to have taken to it with some pleasure, as we learn by a letter, in which he tells Fräulein von Klettenberg a different story:—"Jurisprudence begins to please me very much. Thus it is with all things as with Merseburg beer: the first time we shudder at it, and having drunk it for a week, we cannot do without it." The study of jurisprudence, at any rate, did not absorb him. Schöll has published a note-book kept during this period, which reveals an astonishing activity in desultory research.[2] When we remember that the society at his *table d'hôte* was principally of medical students, we are prepared to find him eagerly throwing himself into the study of anatomy and chemistry. He attended Lobstein's lectures on Anatomy, Ehrmann's clinical lectures, with those of his son on midwifery, and Spielman's on chemistry. Electricity occupied him, Franklin's great discovery having brought

[1] The medical student will best understand what a repetent is, if the word be translated a *grinder;* the university student, if the word be translated a *coach*. The repetent prepares students by an examination, and also by repeating and explaining in private what the professor has taught in the lecture hall.

[2] *Briefe und Aufsätze von Goethe.* Herausgegeben von ADOLF SCHÖLL. In this, as in his other valuable work, Schöll is not content simply to reprint papers entrusted to him, but enriches them by his own careful, accurate editing.

that subject into prominence. No less than nine works on electricity are set down in the notebook to be studied. We also see from this notebook that chromatic subjects begin to attract him—the future antagonist of Newton was preluding in the science. Alchemy still fascinated him; and he wrote to Fräulein von Klettenberg, assuring her that these mystical studies were his secret mistresses. With such a direction of his thoughts, and the influence of this pure, pious woman still operating upon him, we can imagine the disgust which followed his study of the *Système de la Nature*, then making so great a noise in the world. This dead and dull exposition of an atheism as superficial as it was dull, must have been every way revolting to him: irritating to his piety, and unsatisfying to his reason. Voltaire's wit and Rousseau's sarcasms he could copy into his notebook, especially when they pointed in the direction of tolerance; but he who could read Bayle, Voltaire, and Rousseau with delight, turned from the *Système de la Nature* with scorn; especially at a time when we find him taking the sacrament, and trying to keep up an acquaintance with the pious families to which Fräulein von Klettenberg had introduced him. I say *trying*, because even his goodwill could not long withstand their dulness and narrowness; he was forced to give them up, and confessed so much to his friend.

Shortly after his arrival in Strasburg, namely in May 1770, an event occurred which agitated the town, and gave him an opportunity of seeing, for the first time, Raphael's cartoons. Marie Antoinette, the dauphiness of France elect, was to pass through on her way to Paris. On a small island on the Rhine a building was erected for her reception; and this was adorned with tapestries worked after the cartoons. These tapestries roused his enthusiasm; but he was shocked to find that they were placed in the side chambers, while the chief salon was hung with tapestries worked after pictures by modern French artists. That Raphael should thus be thrown into a subordinate position was less exasperating to him than the *subjects* chosen from the modern artists. "These pictures were the history of Jason, Medea, and Creusa—consequently, a story of a most wretched marriage. To the left of the throne was seen the bride struggling against a horrible death, surrounded by persons full of sympathetic grief; to the right stood the father, horror-struck at the murdered babes at his feet; whilst the fury, in her dragon car, drove through the air."

All the ideas which he had learned from Œser were outraged by this selection. He did not quarrel so much with the arrangement which placed Christ and the Apostles in side chambers, since he had thereby been enabled to enjoy the sight of them. "But a blunder like that of the grand saloon put me altogether out of my self-possession, and with loud and vehement cries I called to my comrades to witness the insult against feeling and taste. 'What!' I exclaimed, regardless of bystanders, 'can they so thoughtlessly place before the eyes of a young queen, on her first setting foot in her dominions, the representation of the most horrible marriage perhaps that ever was consummated! Is there among the architects and decorators no one man who understands that pictures *represent something*—that they work upon the mind and feelings—that they produce impressions and excite foreboodings? It is as if they had sent a ghastly spectre to meet this lovely, and as we hear most joyous, lady at the very frontiers!'" To him, indeed, pictures meant something; they were realities to him, because he had the true artistic nature. But to the French architects, as to the Strasburg officials, pictures were pictures—ornaments betokening more or less luxury and taste, flattering the eye, but never touching the soul.

Goethe was right; and omen-lovers afterwards read in that picture the dark foreshadowing of her destiny. But no one then could have foreseen that her future career would be less triumphant than her journey from Vienna to Paris. That smiling, happy, lovely princess of fifteen, whose grace and beauty extort expressions of admiration from every beholder, as she wends her way along roads lined with the jubilant peasantry leaving their fields to gaze upon her, through streets strewn with nosegays, through triumphal arches, and rows of maidens garlanded, awaiting her arrival to offer her spring-flowers as symbols—can her joy be for a moment dashed by a pictured sorrow? Can omens have a dark significance to her?

"I still vividly remember," says Goethe, "the beauteous and lofty mien, as charming as it was dignified, of the young princess. Plainly visible in her carriage, she seemed to be jesting with her female attendants respecting the throng which poured forth to meet her train." Scarcely had the news of her happy arrival in the capital reached them, than it was followed by the intelligence of the accident which had disturbed the festivities of her marriage. Goethe's thoughts

naturally recurred to the ominous pictures: a nature less superstitious would not have been entirely unmoved by such a coincidence.

"The excitement over, the Strasburgers fell into their accustomed tranquillity. The mighty stream of courtly magnificence had now flowed by, and left me no other longing than that for the tapestries of Raphael, which I could have contemplated and worshipped every hour. Luckily my earnest desires succeeded in interesting several persons of consequence so that the tapestries were not taken down till the very last moment."

The re-established quiet left him time for studies again. In a letter of this date, he intimates that he is "so improved in knowledge of Greek as almost to read Homer without a translation. I am a week older; *that* you know says a great deal with me, not because I do much, but many things." Among these many things, we must note his ardent search through mystical metaphysical writings for the material on which his insatiable appetite could feed. Strange revelations in this direction are afforded by his notebook. On one page there is a passage from Thomas à Kempis, followed by a list of mystical works to be read; on another page, sarcastic sentences from Rousseau and Voltaire; on a third a reference to Tauler. The book contains an analysis of the *Phædon* of Moses Mendelssohn, contrasted with that of Plato; and a defence of Giordano Bruno against the criticism of Bayle.

Apropos of Bruno, one may remark the early tendency of Goethe's mind towards Nature-worship. Tacitus, indeed, noticed the tendency as national.[1] The scene in Frankfurt where the boy-priest erected his Pantheistic altar, will help to explain the interest he must have felt in the glimpse Bayle gave him of the great Pantheist of the sixteenth century—the brilliant and luckless Bruno, who after teaching the heresy of Copernicus at Rome and Oxford, after combating Aristotle and gaining the friendship of Sir Philip Sidney, was publicly burnt on the 17th February 1600, in the presence of the Roman crowd: expiating thus the crime of teaching that the earth moved, when the Church declared it to be stable. A twofold interest attached itself to the name of Bruno. He was a martyr of Philosophy, and his works were rare; everyone

[1] *German.* ix., *sub fine.* What Tacitus there represents as a more exalted creed than anthropomorphism, was really a lower form of religious conception —the Fetichism, which in primitive races precedes Polytheism.

abused him, few had read him. He was almost as much hated as Spinoza, and scarcely anyone knew the writings they reviled. The rarity of Bruno's works made them objects of bibliopolic luxury; some were among the black swans of literature. The *Spaccio* had been sold for thirty pounds in England, and three hundred florins in Holland. Hamann, whom Herder and Goethe ardently admired, searched Italy and Germany for the *De la Causa* and *Del Infinito* in vain. Forbidden fruit is tempting; but when the fruit is rare, as well as forbidden, the attraction is irresistible.[1] Pantheism, which captivates poetical minds, has a poetical grandeur in the form given to it by Bruno which would have allured Goethe had his tendencies not already lain in that direction. To preach that doctrine Bruno became a homeless wanderer, and his wanderings ended in martyrdom. Nothing could shake his faith; as he loftily says, "con questa filosofia l'anima mi s'aggrandisce e mi si magnifica l'intelletto."

Goethe's notes on Bayle's criticism may be given here, as illustrating his metaphysical opinions and his mastery of French composition. We can be certain of the authenticity of the French: in spite of inaccuracies and inelegancies, it is fluent and expressive, and gives one the idea of greater conversational command of the language than he reports of himself.

"Je ne suis pas du sentiment de M. Bayle à l'égard de Jor. Brunus, et je ne trouve ni d'impiété ni d'absurdité dans les passages qu'il cite, quoique d'ailleurs je ne prétende pas l'excuser cet homme paradoxe. 'L'uno, l'infinito, lo ente e quello ch' è in tutto, e per tutto anzi è l'*istezzo* ubique. E che posse la infinita dimenzione per non essere magnitudine coincide coll' individuo, come la infinita moltitudine, per non esser numero coincide coll' unita.' *Giord. Brun. Epist. Ded. del Tratt. de la Causa Principio et Uno.*[2]

"Ce passage mériteroit une explication et une recherche plus philosophiques que le disc. de M. Bayle. Il est plus

[1] Since then the works have been made accessible through the cheap and excellent edition collected by A. WAGNER: *Opere di Giordano Bruno Nolano.* 2 vols. Leipzic: 1830. But I do not observe that, now they are accessible, many persons interest themselves enough in Bruno to read them; yet they are worth studying.

[2] "The One, the Infinite, the Being, and that which is in all things is everywhere the same. Thus infinite extension not being magnitude coincides with the individual, as infinite multitude because it is not number coincides with unity." The words in italics are given as in Goethe—carelessly copied: *l'istesso* and *cosi*. See BRUNO, *Opere*, i. p. 211, ed. Wagner.

facile de prononcer un passage obscur et contraire à nos notions que de la déchiffrer, et que de suivre les idées d'un grand homme. Il est de même du passage où il plaisante sur une idée de Brunus, que je n'applaudis pas entièrement, si peu que les précédentes, mais que je crois du moins profondes et peut-être fécondes pour un observateur judicieux. Notez, je vous prie, de B. une absurdité: il dit que ce n'est point l'être qui fait qu'il y a beaucoup de choses, mais que cette multitude consiste dans ce qui paroit sur la superfice de la substance."

In the same notebook there is a remarkable comment on a chapter in Fabricius (*Bibliog. Antiq.*) which Goethe has written in Latin, and which may be thus rendered: "To discuss God apart from Nature is both difficult and perilous: it is as if we separated the soul from the body. We know the soul only through the medium of the body, and God only through Nature. Hence the absurdity, as it appears to me, of accusing those of absurdity who philosophically have united God with the world. For everything which exists, necessarily pertains to the essence of God, because God is the one Being whose existence includes all things. Nor does the Holy Scripture contradict this, although we differently interpret its dogmas each according to his views. All antiquity thought in the same way; an unanimity which to me has great significance. To me the judgment of so many men speaks highly for the rationality of the doctrine of emanation; though I am of no sect, and grieve much that Spinoza should have coupled this pure doctrine with his detestable errors."[1] This reference to Spinoza, whom he subsequently reverenced as one of his best teachers, is easily explicable when we reflect that he then knew no more of Spinoza than could be gathered from Bayle.

[1] I subjoin the original, as the reader may not be displeased to see a specimen of Goethe's Latin composition: Separatim de Deo, et natura rerum disserere difficile et periculosum est, eodem modo quam si de corpore et anima sejunctim cogitamus. Animam nonnisi mediante corpore, Deum nonnisi perspecta natura cognoscimus; hinc absurdum mihi videtur, eos absurditatis accusare, qui ratiocinatione maxime philosophica Deum cum mundo conjunxere. Quæ enim sunt omnia ad essentiam Dei pertinere necesse est, cum Deus sit unicum existens et omnia comprehendat. Nec Sacer Codex nostræ sententiæ refragatur, cujus tamen dicta ab unoquoque in sententiam suam torqueri patientur ferimus. Omnis antiquitatis ejusdem fuit sententiæ, cui consensui quam multum tribuo. Testimonio enim mihi est virorum tantorum sententia rectæ rationi quam convenientissimum fuisse systema emanativum licet nulli subscribere velim sectæ, valdeque doleam Spinozismum, teterrimæ erroribus ex eodem fonte manantibus, doctrinæ huic purissimæ iniquissimum fratrem natum esse.

Time was not all consumed by these studies, multifarious as they were. Lively Strasburg had its amusements, and Goethe joined his friend Salzmann in many a pleasant party. The various pleasure grounds and public gardens were always crowded with promenaders, and there the mixture of the old national costume with modern fashions gave charming variety to the scene, and made the pretty women still more attractive.

He found himself in the presence of two sharply-defined nationalities. Alsatia, and especially Strasburg, although belonging to France, still preserved its old German character. Eight hundred years of national life were not to be set aside at once, when it pleased the powers, at the peace of Westphalia, to say that Alsatia should be French. Until the middle of the eighteenth century the old German speech, costume, and manners were so dominant, that a Frankfurter, or a Mainzer, found himself at once at home there. But just before the outbreak of the French Revolution the gradual influx of officials brought about a sort of fashion in French costume. Milliners, friseurs, and dancing masters had done their best, or their worst, to "polish" society. But the surface was rough, and did not take kindly to this polishing. Side by side with the French *employé*, there was the old German professor, who obstinately declined to acquire more of the foreigners' language than sufficed for daily needs and household matters; for the rest he kept sturdily Teutonic. Even in costume the imitation was mainly confined to the upper classes.[1] Goethe describes the maidens of the bourgeoisie still wearing their hair in one long plait, falling behind, and their petticoats of picturesque but perilous brevity.

Salzmann introduced him to several families, and thus more than by all his advice helped to soften down the exuberant expression of animal spirits which very often sinned against quiet conventionalities; for by inducing him to frequent society, it forced him to learn that demeanour which society imperatively demands. In *Wilhelm Meister* great stress is laid upon the culture necessary to fit a man of genius for society; and one of the great motives advanced for the pursuance of a theatrical career is the facility it affords a man of gaining address.

An excitable impetuous youth, ambitious of shining in

[1] STOEBER: *Der Aktuar Salzmann*, 1855, p. 7.

society, yet painfully conscious of the unsuitableness of hi previous training for the attainment of that quietness deeme so necessary, would require to attend to every trifle whic might affect his deportment. Thus, although he had magni ficent hair, he allowed the hairdresser to tie it up in a bag and affix a false queue. This obliged him to remain propp up powdered, from an early hour of the morning, and also t keep from overheating himself and from violent gestures, les he should betray the false ornament. "This restraint con tributed much towards making me for a time more gentle an polite in my bearing; and I got accustomed to shoes an stockings, and to carrying my hat under my arm; I di not, however, neglect wearing fine understockings as a protec tion against the Rhine gnats." To these qualifications as cavalier, he added those of an excellent swordsman and ride With his fellow-students he had abundant exercise in the use o the rapier; and prompted, I presume, by his restless desire t do all that his friends did, he began to learn the violoncello!

His circle of friends widened; and even that of his fellow boarders in the Krämergasse increased. Among the latte two deserve special mention—Jung Stilling and Franz Lerse Stilling has preserved an account of their first meeting.[1] Abou twenty were assembled at dinner, when a young man entere the room in high spirits, whose large clear eyes, splendid brow and beautifully proportioned figure, irresistibly drew the atten tion of Troost and Stilling. The former remarked, "Tha must be an extraordinary man!" Stilling assented; bu feared lest they might be somewhat annoyed by him, h looked such a wild rollicking fellow. Meanwhile they learne that this student, whose unconstrained freedom and *àplom* made them draw under their shells, was named Herr Goethe Dinner proceeded. Goethe, who sat opposite Stilling, ha completely the lead in conversation, without once seeking i At length one of the company began quizzing the wig of poo Stilling; and the fun was relished by all except Troost, Sal mann, and one who, indignantly reproving them for makin game of so inoffensive a person, silenced the ridicule imme diately; this was none other than the large-eyed studer whose appearance had excited Stilling's uneasiness. Th friendship thus begun was continued by the sympathy an tender affectionateness Goethe always displayed towards th

[1] STILLING'S *Wanderschaft*, p. 158.

simple, earnest, and unfriended thinker, whose deep religious convictions, and trusting child-like nature, singularly interested him. Goethe was never tired of listening to the story of his life. Instinctively he sought on all sides to penetrate the mysteries of humanity, and, by probing every man's experience, to make it his own. Here was a poor charcoal-burner, who from tailoring had passed to keeping a school; that failing, he had resumed his needle; and having joined a religious sect, had, in silent communion with his own soul, gained for himself a sort of culture which raised him above the ordinary height of men:—what was there in his life or opinions to captivate the riotous, sceptical, prosperous student? There was *earnestness*—there was *genuineness*. Goethe was eminently qualified to become the friend of one who held opposite convictions to his own, for his tolerance was large and genuine, and he respected every real conviction. Sympathising with Stilling, listening to him, and dexterously avoiding any interference with his religious faith, he was not only enabled to be his friend, but also to learn quietly and surely the inner nature of such men.

Franz Lerse attracted him by different qualities: upright manliness, scrupulous orderliness, dry humour, and a talent for reconciling antagonists. As a memorial of their friendship his name is given to the gallant fellow in *Götz von Berlichingen*, who knows how to subordinate himself with dignity.

Salzmann had some years before founded a sort of club, or, as Stilling calls it, *Gesellschaft der schönen Wissenschaften*, the object of which was to join a book society with a debating club. In 1763–4 this club had among its members no less a person than O. F. Müller, the renowned helminthologist; and now in 1770–1 it numbered, among others, Goethe, Lerse, Jung Stilling, Lenz, Weyland, and, as a guest, was honoured by the presence of Herder, who was then writing his work on the *Origin of Language*.

Generally speaking, Goethe is so liberal in information about his friends and contemporaries, and so sparing of precise indications of his own condition, that we are left in the dark respecting much that would be welcome knowledge. There is one thing mentioned by him which is very significant: although his health was sufficiently established for ordinary purposes, he still suffered from great irritability. Loud sounds were disagreeable to him; diseased objects aroused

loathing and horror. And he was especially troubled with giddiness, which came over him whenever he looked down from a height. All these infirmities he resolved to conquer and that somewhat violently. In the evening when they beat the tattoo, he went close to the drums, though the powerful rolling and beating of so many seemed enough to make his heart burst in his bosom. Alone he ascended the highest pinnacle of the cathedral, and sat in what is called the neck, under the crown, for a quarter of an hour before venturing to step out again into the open air. Standing on a platform, scarcely an ell square, he saw before him a boundless prospect, the church and the supports of his standing place being concealed by the ornaments. He felt exactly as if carried up in a balloon. These painful sensations he repeated until they became quite indifferent; he subsequently derived great advantage from this conquest, in mountainous excursions and geological studies. Anatomy was also of double value, as it taught him to tolerate the most repulsive sights while satisfying his thirst for knowledge. He succeeded so well, that no hideous sight could disturb his self-possession. He also sought to steel himself against the terrors of imagination. The awful and shuddering impressions of darkness in churchyards, solitary places, churches and chapels by night he contrived to render indifferent—so much so, that when a desire came over him to recall in such scenes the pleasing shudder of youth, he could scarcely succeed even by the strangest and most terrific images.

Two love poems, written during this year—*Stirbt der Fuchs so gilt der Balg*, and *Blinde Kuh*—put us on the scent of flirtations. He is silent respecting Dorilis and Theresa in his autobiography; and in ordinary cases a biographer would accept that silence, without drawing any conclusion from the poems. No one hereafter will think of identifying the Claribels, Isabels, and Madelines, with young ladies whom our poets met in society, and who led captive their inconstant hearts. With Goethe it is otherwise. All his poems grow out of occasions: they are flowers of which circumstance is the earth. Utterances of real feelings to real beings, they are unlike all coquettings with imaginary beauties. His poems are evidences.[1] Unhappily, the bare *fact* in this instance is all we can discover.

[1] I find Viehoff insisting on a similar clue: he supposes Dorilis and Theresa (probably one and the same person) to be real persons, and tha

One flirtation, however, was not so easily effaced. From childhood his strange didactic father had instructed him and his sister in dancing, a task which seems rather ludicrous as we picture to ourselves the cold, formal, rigorous old Frankfurter. He was perfectly unconscious of any incongruity. With the utmost gravity he drilled them into a minuet, playing to them on the flageolet. Goethe's dancing had been for sometime neglected, and when he stood up to a minuet once at Leipzig, he got through it so awkwardly as to draw upon himself the suspicion of having done so to prevent being invited again.

A handsome youth unable to dance was an anomaly in Strasburg. Not a Sunday evening passed without the pleasure gardens being crowded with gay dancers; galas frequently enlivened the week; and the merry Alsatians, then as now, seldom met but they commenced spinning round in the waltz. Into these gardens, amidst these waltzers, Goethe constantly went—yet could not waltz. He resolved at length to learn. A friend recommended him to a dancing-master of repute, who soon pronounced himself gratified with the progress made.

This master, a dry, precise, but amiable Frenchman, had two daughters, who assisted him at his lessons, acting both as partners and correctors. Two pretty girls, both under twenty, charming with French vivacity and coquetry, could not fail to interest the young poet; nor could the graceful, handsome youth fail to create an impression on two girls whose lives were somewhat lonesome. Symptoms of this interest very soon showed themselves. The misfortune was that the state of their feelings made what dramatists call "a situation." Goethe's heart inclined towards Emilia, who loved another; while that of Lucinda, the elder sister, was bestowed upon him. Emilia was afraid to trust herself too much with him; but Lucinda was always at hand, ready to waltz with him, to protract his lesson, or to show him little attentions. There were not many pupils; so that he often remained after his lesson to chat away the time, or to read aloud to them a romance: dangerous moments!

He saw how things stood, yet puzzled himself about the reserve of the younger sister. The cause of it came out at

Goethe knew them through Salzmann. Mr. Demmler argues with some force that Dorilis can be none other than Frederika,—of whom more anon.

last. One evening, after the dance was over, Lucinda detain
him in the dancing-room, telling him that her sister was in t
sitting-room with a fortune-teller, who was disclosing the co
dition of a lover to whom the girl's heart was given. "Mine
said Lucinda, "is free, and I must get used to its bei
slighted."

He tried to parry this thrust by divers little compliment
and, indiscreetly enough, advised her to try her own fate wi
the fortune-teller, offering to do the same himself. Lucin
did not like that tampering with fate, declaring that the d
closures of the oracle were too true to be made a matter
sport. Probably this piqued him into a little more earne
ness than he had shown, for ultimately he persuaded her
go into the sitting-room with him. They found Emilia mu
pleased with the information that she had received from t
pythoness, who was highly flattered at the new devotee
her shrine. A handsome reward was promised her if s
should disclose the truth. With the customary ceremoni
she began to tell the fortune of the elder sister. She hesitate
"Oh, I see," said Emilia, "that you have something u
pleasant to tell." Lucinda turned pale, but said, "Spe
out; it will not cost me my life." The fortune-teller heav
a deep sigh, and proceeded with her disclosures. Lucin
she said, was in love; but her love was not returned; anoth
person standing in the way. And she went on with mo
in the same style. It is not difficult to imagine that the sy
should readily enough interpret the little drama which w
then acting by the youth and two girls before her eye
Lucinda showed evidence of distress; and the old wom
endeavoured to give a better turn to the affair by throwi
out hopes of letters and money. "Letters," said Lucin
"I do not expect; and money I do not want. If I love
you say, I have a right to be loved in return." The fortun
teller shuffled the cards again; but that only made matte
worse; the girl now appeared in the oracular vision in great
trouble, her lover at a greater distance. A third shuffle
the cards was still worse; Lucinda burst into a passiona
flood of tears, and rushed from the room. "Follow he
said Emilia, "and comfort her." But he hesitated, n
seeing what comfort he could well give, as he could n
assure her of some return for her affection. "Let us
together," he replied. Emilia doubted whether her presen
would do good; but she consented. Lucinda had lock

herself in; and paying the old woman for her work, Goethe left the house.

He had scarcely courage to revisit the sisters; but on the third day Emilia sent for him, and he received his lesson as usual. Lucinda, however, was absent; and when he asked for her, Emilia told him that she was in bed, declaring that she should die. She had thrown out great reproaches against him for his ungrateful behaviour. "And yet I do not know," said he, "that I am guilty of having expressed any sort of affection for her. I know somebody who can bear me witness of that." Emilia smiled. "I comprehend," she said; "but if we are not careful we shall all find ourselves in a disastrous position. Forgive me if I say that you must not go on with your lessons. My father says that he is ashamed to take your money any longer, unless you mean to pursue the art of dancing; since you know already what is needed by a young man in the world." "Do you tell me to avoid the house, Emilia?" he asked. "Yes," she said; "but not on my own account. When you had gone the other day, I had the cards cut for you; and the same answer was given thrice. You were surrounded by friends, and all sorts of good fortune; but the ladies kept aloof from you; my poor sister stood furthest of all. One other constantly came near to you; but never close; for a third person, a man, always came between. I will confess that I thought I was myself this second lady; and now you will understand my advice. I have promised myself to another, and until now I loved him more than any one. Yet your presence might become more dangerous to me than it has been; and then what a position would be yours between two sisters, one of whom you would have made miserable by your affection, and the other by your coldness." She held out her hand and bade him farewell; she then led him to the door; and in token that it was to be their last meeting, she threw herself upon his bosom and kissed him tenderly. Just as he had put his arms round her, a side door flew open, and her sister, in a light but decorous dressing gown, rushed in, crying, "You shall not be the only one to take leave of him!" Emilia released him. Lucinda took him in her arms, pressed her black locks against his cheeks; remained thus for some time, and then drawing back looked him earnestly in the face. He took her hand, and tried to muster some kind expressions to soothe her; but she turned away, walked impassionately up and down the room, and then threw herself

in great agitation into a corner of the sofa. Emilia went up to her, but was violently repulsed; and a scene ensued, which had in it, says the principal performer, nothing really theatrical, although it could only be represented on the stage by an actor of sensibility. Lucinda poured forth reproaches against her sister. "This," said she, "is not the first heart beating for me that you have wheedled away. Was it not so with the one now betrothed to you, while I looked on and bore it? I, only, know the tears it cost me; and now you would rob me of this one. How many would you manage to keep at once? I am frank and easy-tempered, and all think they understand me at once, and may slight me. You are secret and quiet, and make people wonder at what may be concealed behind: there is nothing there but a cold, selfish heart, sacrificing everything to itself." Emilia seated herself by her sister, and remained silent, while Lucinda, growing more excited, began to betray matters not quite proper for him to hear. Emilia made a sign to him to withdraw. But Lucinda caught the sound, sprang toward him, and then remained lost in thought. "I know that I have lost you," she said: "I claim you no more;—but neither shall you have him." So saying, she grasped him wildly by the head, with her hands thrust among his hair, pressed her face to his, and kissed him repeatedly on the mouth. "Now fear my curse! Woe upon woe, for ever and ever, to her who for the first time after me kisses these lips! Dare to sport with him now! Heaven hears my curse! And you, begone, begone while you may!"

He hurried from the house never to return. Is not this narrative like a scene in a novel? The excited little French woman—the bewildered poet—the old fortune-teller, and the dry old dancing-master, faintly sketched, in the background, are the sort of figures a novelist would delight in.

CHAPTER VI

HERDER AND FREDERIKA

One thing very noticeable in this Strasburg period is the thoroughly *German* culture it gave him. In those days culture was mostly classical and French. Classical studies had never

exercised much influence over him; and, indeed, throughout his career, he approached antiquity more through Art than through the Greek and Roman writers. To the French, on the other hand, he owed a great deal, both of direction and material. A revival of the old German nationality was, however, actively agitated at this epoch. Klopstock, Lessing, Herder, Shakspeare, and Ossian were the rivals opposed to France. A feeling of national pride gave its momentum to this change in taste. Gothic art began to be considered the true art of modern times.

At the *table d'hôte* our friends, all German, not only banished the French language, but made a point of being in every way unlike the French. French literature was ridiculed as affected, insincere, unnatural. The truth, homely strength, and simplicity of the German character were set against this literature of courtiers. Goethe had been dabbling in mediæval studies, had been awe-struck by the cathedral, had been inspired by Shakspeare, and had seen Lessing's iconoclastic wit scattering the pretensions of French poetry. Moreover, he had read the biography of *Götz von Berlichingen*, and the picture of that Titan in an age of anarchy had so impressed itself upon him, that the conception of a dramatic reproduction of it had grown up in his mind. *Faust* also lay there as a germ. The legend of that wonder-worker especially attracted him, now that he was in the condition into which youths so readily fall after a brief and unsatisfactory attempt to penetrate the mysteries of science. "Like him, too, I had swept the circle of science, and had early learned its vanity; like him I had trodden various paths, always returning unsatisfied." The studies of alchemy, medicine, jurisprudence, philosophy, and theology, which had so long engaged him, must have made him feel quite a personal interest in the old Faust legend.

In such a mood the acquaintance with Herder was of great importance. Herder was five years his senior, and had already created a name for himself. He came to Strasburg with an eye-disease, which obliged him to remain there the whole winter, during the cure. Goethe, charmed with this new vigorous intellect, attended on him during the operation, and sat with him morning and evening during his convalescence, listening to the wisdom which fell from those lips, as a pupil listens to a much-loved master. Great was the contrast between the two men, yet the difference did not separate them.

Herder was decided, clear, pedagogic; knowing his own aim and fond of communicating his ideas. Goethe was sceptic and inquiring. Herder rude, sarcastic, and bitter; Goeth amiable and infinitely tolerant. The bitterness which repelle so many friends from Herder, could not repel Goethe: it w a peculiarity of his to be at all times able to learn fro antagonistic natures; meeting them on the common ground sympathy, he avoided those subjects on which inevitably the must clash. It is somewhat curious that although Herde took a great liking to his young friend, and was grateful fo his kind attentions, he seems to have had little suspicion o his genius. The only fragment we have of that period, whic gives us a hint of his opinion, is in a letter to his bride, date February 1772: "Goethe is really a good fellow, only some what light and sparrow-like,[1] for which I incessantly reproac him. He was almost the only one who visited me during m illness in Strasburg whom I saw with pleasure; and I believ I influenced him in more ways than one to his advantage. His own conceit may have stood between Goethe and himself or he may have been too conscious of his young friend defects to think much of his genius. "Herder, Herder, Goethe writes to him from Strasburg, "be to me what yo are. If I am destined to be your planet, so will I be, an willingly and truly, a friendly moon to your earth. But yo must feel that I would rather be Mercury, the last, the smalle of the seven, to revolve with you about the sun, than the fir of the five which turn round Saturn."[2] In one of the man inaccuracies of his *Autobiography*, he says, that he withhel from Herder his intention of writing "Götz"; but there is passage in Herder's work on German Art, addressed to Goeth which very plainly alludes to this intention.[3] Such oversigh are inevitable in retracing the minor details of the past.

There was indeed contrast enough between the two, in ag character, intellect, and knowledge, to have prevented a very close sympathy. Herder loved the abstract and ideal i men and things, and was for ever criticising and complainin

[1] *Nur etwas leicht und Spatzenmässig:* I translate the phrase, leaving t reader to interpret it, for twenty Germans have given twenty different mea ings to the word "sparrow-like," some referring to the chattering of sparrow others to the boldness of sparrows, others to the curiosity of sparrows, a others to the libertine character of sparrows. Whether Herder meant ga volatile, forward, careless, or amorous, I cannot decide.

[2] *Aus Herder's Nachlass*, i. p. 28.

[3] HERDER: *Von deutschen Art und Kunst*, p. 112.

of the individual, because it did not realise his ideal standard. What Gervinus says of Herder's relation to Lessing, namely, that he loved him when he considered him as a whole, but could never cease plaguing him about details, holds good also of his relation to Goethe through life. Goethe had little of that love of mankind in the abstract, which to Herder, and so many others, seems the substitute for individual love,—which animates philanthropists who are sincere in their philanthropy, even when they are bad husbands, bad fathers, bad brothers, and bad friends. He had, instead of this, the most overflowing love for individual men. His concrete and affectionate nature was more attracted to men than to abstractions. It is because many do not recognise this that they declaim against him for his "indifference" to political matters, to history, and to many of the great questions which affect Humanity.

Herder's influence on Goethe was manifold, but mainly in the direction of poetry. He taught him to look at the Bible as a magnificent illustration of the truth that Poetry is the product of a national spirit, not the privilege of a cultivated few. From the poetry of the Hebrew People he led him to other illustrations of national song; and here Homer and Ossian were placed highest. It was at this time that Ossian made the tour of Europe, and everywhere met believers. Goethe was so delighted with the wild northern singer, that he translated the song of "Selma," and afterwards incorporated it in *Werther*. Besides Shakspeare and Ossian, he also learned, through Herder, to appreciate the *Vicar of Wakefield;* and the exquisite picture there painted, he was now to see living in the parsonage of Frederika's father.

Upon the broad and lofty gallery of the Strasburg Cathedral he and his companions often met to salute the setting sun with brimming goblets of Rhine wine. The calm wide landscape stretched itself for miles before them, and they pointed out the several spots which memory endeared to each. One spot, above all others, has interest for us—Sesenheim, the home of Frederika. Of all the women who enjoyed the distinction of Goethe's love, none seem to me so fascinating as Frederika. Her idyllic presence is familiar to every lover of German literature, through the charming episode of the *Autobiography*, over which the poet lingered with peculiar delight. The secretary is now living to whom this episode was dictated, and he remembers vividly how much affected Goethe seemed

to be as these scenes revisited memory; walking up and dow the room, with his hands behind him, he often stopped in H walk, and paused in the dictation; then after a long silenc followed by a deep sigh, he continued the narrative in a low tone.

Weyland, a fellow-boarder, had often spoken of a clergyma who with his wife and two amiable daughters, lived nea Drusenheim, a village about sixteen miles from Strasbur Early in October 1770, Weyland proposed to his friend t accompany him on a visit to the worthy pastor. It wa agreed between them that Weyland should introduce hi under the guise of a shabby theological student. His love c incognito often prompted him to such disguises. In th present instance he borrowed some old clothes, and combe his hair in such a way that when Weyland saw him he burs out into a fit of laughter. They set forth in high glee. A Drusenheim they stopped, Weyland to make himself spruce Goethe to rehearse his part. Riding across the meadows t Sesenheim, they left their horses at the inn, and walke leisurely towards the parsonage,—an old and somewhat dilap dated farm-house, but very picturesque, and very still. The found pastor Brion at home, and were welcomed by him in friendly manner. The rest of the family were in the fields Weyland went after them, leaving Goethe to discuss paris interests with the pastor, who soon grew confidential. Pre sently the wife appeared; and she was followed by the elde daughter bouncing into the room, inquiring after Frederika and hurrying away again to seek her.

Refreshments were brought, and old acquaintances wer talked over with Weyland,—Goethe listening. Then th daughter returned, uneasy at not having found Frederika This little domestic fuss about Frederika prepared the poe for her appearance. At length she came in. Both girls wor the national costume, with its short, white, full skirt and fu below, not concealing the neatest of ankles, a tight bodic and black taffeta apron. Frederika's straw hat hung on he arm; and the beautiful braids of her fair hair drooped o a delicate white neck. Merry blue eyes, and a piquant littl *nez retroussé*, completed her attractions. In gazing on thi bright young creature, then only sixteen, Goethe felt ashame of his disguise. It hurt his *amour propre* to appear thu before her like a bookish student, shorn of all personal advan tages. Meanwhile conversation rattled on between Weylan

nd his family. Endless was the list of uncles, aunts, nieces, ousins, gossips, and guests they had something to say about, aving him completely excluded from the conversation. rederika seeing this, seated herself by him, and with charm- g frankness began to talk to him. Music was lying on the rpsichord; she asked him if he played, and on his modestly- ualified affirmative begged him "to favour them." Her ther, however, suggested that *she* ought to begin, by a song. he sat down to the harpsichord, which was somewhat out of ne, and, in a provincial style, performed several pieces, such then were thought enchanting. After this she began to ng. The song was tender and melancholy, but she was parently not in the mood, for acknowledging her failure she se and said, "If I sing badly it is not the fault of my rpsichord nor of my teacher: let us go into the open air, d then you shall hear my Alsatian and Swiss songs." Into e air they went, and soon her merry voice carolled forth:

"I come from a forest as dark as the night,
And believe me, I love thee, my only delight.
Ei ja, ei ja, ei, ei, ei, ei, ja, ja, ja!"[1]

e was already a captive.

His tendency to see pictures and poetry in the actual scenes life, here made him see realised the Wakefield family. If astor Brion did not accurately represent Mr. Primrose, yet e might stand for him; the elder daughter for Olivia, the unger for Sophia; and when at supper a youth came into e room, Goethe involuntary exclaimed, "What, Moses too!" very merry supper they had; so merry that Weyland, fearing st wine and Frederika should make his friend betray himself, oposed a walk in the moonlight. Weyland offered his arm Salome, the elder daughter (always named *Olivia* in the *utobiography*), Frederika took Goethe's arm. Youth and oonlight—need one say more? Already he began to scruti- se her tone in speaking of cousins and neighbours, jealous st it should betray an affection. But her blithe spirit was as t untroubled, and he listened in delicious silence to her embarrassed loquacity.

On retiring for the night the friends had much to talk over. eyland assured him the incognito had not been betrayed; the contrary, the family had inquired after the young

[1] The entire song is to be found in the *Sesenheimer Liederbuch* and in hoff: *Goethe Erläutert*, vol. i. p. 110.

Goethe, of whose joviality and eccentricities they had oft heard. And now came the tremulous question: was Frec rika engaged? No. That was a relief! Had she ever be in love? No. Still better! Thus chatting, they sat till de in the night, as friends chat on such occasions, with hearts t full and brains too heated for repose. At dawn Goethe w awake, impatient to see Frederika with the dew of morni on her cheek. While dressing he looked at his costume disgust, and tried in vain to remedy it. His hair could managed; but when his arms were thrust into his threadba coat, the sleeves of which were ludicrously short, he look pitiable; Weyland, peeping at him from under the coverl giggled. In his despair he resolved to ride back to Strasbu and return in his own costume. On the way another pl suggested itself. He exchanged clothes with the son of t landlord at the Drusenheim Inn, a youth of his own siz corked his eyebrows, imitated the son's gait and speech, a returned to the parsonage the bearer of a cake. This seco disguise also succeeded, so long as he kept at a distance; b Frederika running up to him and saying, "George, what you here?" he was forced to reveal himself. "Not Georg but one who asks forgiveness." "You shocking creature she exclaimed, "how you frightened me!" The jest w soon explained and forgiven, not only by Frederika, but the family, who laughed heartily at it.

Gaily passed the day; the two hourly falling deeper a deeper in love. Passion does not chronicle by time: momer are hours, hours years, when two hearts are rushing into o It matters little, therefore, that the *Autobiography* speaks only two days passed in this happy circle, whereas a letter his says distinctly he was there "some days—*einige Tage*" (than three cannot be understood by *einige*). He was th long enough to fall in love, and to captivate the whole fam by his gaiety, obligingness, and poetic gifts. He had giv them a taste of his quality as a romancist, by telling the st of *The New Melusina* (subsequently published in the *Wand jahre*). He had also interested himself in the pastor's pla for the rebuilding of the parsonage, and proposed to t away the sketches with him to Strasburg.

The pain of separation was lightened by the promise speedy reunion. He returned to Strasburg with new life his heart. He had not long before written to a friend t for the first time he knew what it was to be happy without

heart being engaged. Pleasant people and manifold studies left him no time for *feeling*. "Enough, my present life is like a sledge journey, splendid and sounding, but with just as little for the heart as it has much for eyes and ears." Another tone runs through his letters now, to judge from the only one which has been recovered.[1] It is addressed to Frederika, dated the 5th October.

"Dear new friend,—

"I dare to call you so; for if I can trust the language of eyes, then did mine in the first glance read the hope of this new friendship in yours—and for our hearts I will answer. You, good and gentle as I know you, will you not show some favour to one who loves you so?

"Dear, dear friend,—

"That I have something to say to you there can be no question; but it is quite another matter whether I exactly know wherefore I now write, and *what* I may write. Thus much I am conscious of by a certain inward unrest: that I would gladly be by your side, and a scrap of paper is as true a consolation and as winged a steed for me here in noisy Strasburg, as it can be to you in your quiet, if you truly feel the separation from your friend.

"The circumstances of our journey home you can easily imagine, if you marked my pain at parting, and how I longed to remain behind. Weyland's thoughts went forwards, mine backwards; so you can understand how our conversation was neither interesting nor copious.

"At the end of the Wanzenau we thought to shorten our route, and found ourselves in the midst of a morass. Night came on; and we only needed the storm which threatened to overtake us, to have had every reason for being fully convinced of the love and constancy of our princesses.[2]

"Meanwhile, the scroll which I held constantly in my hand —fearful of losing it—was a talisman, which charmed away all the perils of the journey. And now?—oh I dare not utter —either you can guess it, or you will not believe it!

"At last we arrived, and our first thought, which had been our joy on the road, was the project soon to see you again.

"How delicious a sensation is the hope of seeing again

[1] SCHÖLL, *Briefe und Aufsätze*, p. 51. The letters in Pfeiffer's book are manifest forgeries.

[2] An allusion doubtless intelligible to the person addressed, but I can make nothing of it.

those we love! And we, when our coddled heart is a litt sorrowful, at once bring it medicine and say: Dear little hea be quiet, you will not long be away from her you love; quiet, dear little heart! Meanwhile we give it a chimera play with, and then is it good and still as a child to whom t mother gives a doll instead of the apple which it must not ea

"Enough, we are *not* here, and so you see you were wron You would not believe that the noisy gaiety or Strasburg wou be disagreeable to me after the sweet country pleasures enjoye with you. Never, Mamsell, did Strasburg seem so empty me as now. I hope, indeed, it will be better when the remen brance of those charming hours is a little dimmed—when I n longer feel so vividly how good, how amiable my friend Yet ought I to forget that, or to wish it? No; I will rath retain a little sorrow and write to you frequently.

"And now many, many thanks and many sincere remen brances to your dear parents. To your dear sister ma hundred . . . what I would so willingly give you again

A few days after his return, Herder underwent the operatio previously alluded to. Goethe was constantly with him; b as he carefully concealed all his mystical studies, fearing have them ridiculed, so one may suppose he concealed al the new passion which deliciously tormented him. In silen he occupied himself with Frederika, and carefully sketche plans for the new parsonage. He sent her books, and receive from her a letter, which of course seemed priceless.

In November he was again at Sesenheim. Night h already set in when he arrived; his impatience would n suffer him to wait till morning, the more so as the landlo assured him the young ladies had only just gone home, whe "they expected some one." He felt jealous of this expect friend; and he hastened to the parsonage. Great was h surprise to find them *not* surprised; greater still to hear Fr derika whisper, "Did I not say so? Here he is!" H loving heart had prophesied his coming, and had named t very day.

The next day was Sunday, and many guests were expecte Early in the morning Frederika proposed a walk with hi leaving her mother and sister to look after domestic prepar tions. Who shall describe that walk, wherein the youthf pair abandoned themselves without concealment to all t delightful nothings of commencing love? They talked ov the expected pleasures of the day, and arranged how to

ways together. She taught him several games; he taught r others; and underneath these innocent arrangements, Love renely smiled. The church bell called them from their lk. To church they went, and listened—not very atten-ely—to the worthy pastor. Another kind of devotion made eir hearts devout. He meditated on her charming qualities, d as his glance rested on her ruddy lips, he recalled the last ne woman's lips had been pressed to his own; recalled the rse which the excited French girl had uttered, a curse which therto had acted like a spell.

This superstition not a little troubled him in games of rfeits, where kisses always form a large proportion; and his esence of mind was often tried in the attempts to evade em; the more so as many of the guests, suspecting the nder relation between him and Frederika, sportively took ery occasion to make them kiss. She, with natural instinct, ded him in his evasions. The time came, however, when, rried away by the excitement of the dance and games, he lt the burning pressure of her lips crush the superstition in a

"Kiss, a long, long kiss
Of youth and beauty gathered into one."

He returned to Strasburg, if not a formally betrothed, yet accepted lover. As such the family and friends seem to ve regarded him. Probably no betrothal took place, on ac-unt of his youth, and the necessity of obtaining his father's nsent. His muse, lately silent, now found voice again, and veral of the poems Frederika inspired are to be read in his blished works.[1]

He had been sent to Strasburg to gain a doctor's degree. is Dissertation had been commenced just before this Sesen-eim episode. But Shakspeare, Ossian, *Faust*, *Götz*, and, above l, Frederika, scattered his plans, and he followed the advice friends to choose, instead of a Dissertation, a number of neses, upon which to hold a disputation. His father would t hear of such a thing, but demanded a regular Dissertation. e chose, therefore, this theme, "*That it is the duty of every w-maker to establish a certain religious worship binding upon rgy and laity.*" A theme he supported by historical and ilosophical arguments. The Dissertation was written in tin, and sent to his father, who received it with pleasure.

[1] The whole have been reprinted in the *Sesenheimer Liederbuch;* and in EHOFF'S *Goethe Erläutert.*

But the dean of the faculty would not receive it—either becau its contents were paradoxical, or because it was not sufficien erudite. In lieu thereof he was permitted to choose Thes for disputation. The Disputation was held on the 6th August 1771, his opponent being Franz Lerse, who press him hard. A jovial *schmaus*, a real students' banquet, crown this promotion of Dr. Goethe.[1]

He could find no time for visits to Sesenheim during th active preparation for his doctorate; but he was not entire separated from Frederika: her mother had come with bo daughters to Strasburg, on a visit to a rich relative. He h been for some time acquainted with this family, and had ma opportunities of meeting his beloved. The girls, who can in their Alsatian costume, found their cousins and frien dressed like Frenchwomen; a contrast which greatly vexe Olivia, who felt "like a maidservant" among these fashionab friends. Her restless manners evidently made Goethe som what ashamed of her. Frederika, on the other hand, thoug equally out of her element in this society, was more se possessed, and perfectly contented so long as he was by h side. There is in the *Autobiography* a significant phras this visit of the family is called a "peculiar test of his love And test it was, as every one must see who considers th relations in which the lovers stood. He was the son of a important Frankfurt citizen, and held almost the position of nobleman in relation to the poor pastor's daughter. Indee the social disparity was so great, that many explain his n marrying Frederika on the ground of such a match being in possible,—"his father," it is said, "would not have listened such a thing for a moment." Love in nowise troubles its about station, never asks "what will the world say?" b there is quite a different solicitude felt by Love when a proaching Marriage. In the first eagerness of passion, prince may blindly pursue a peasant; but when his love gratified by return, when reflection reasserts its duties, th the prince will consider what in other minds will be t estimation of his mistress. Men are very sensitive to t opinions of others on their mistresses and wives; and Goeth love must indeed have been put to the test, at seeing Frederi and her sister thus in glaring contrast with the society

[1] There is some obscurity on this point. From a letter to Salzmann seems he only got a licentiate degree at this time. The doctorate certainly had; but *when* his diploma was prepared is not known.

ich he moved. In the groves of Sesenheim she was a ood-nymph; but in Strasburg salons the wood-nymph seemed peasant. Who is there that has not experienced a similar struction of illusion, in seeing an admired person lose almost charm in the change of environment?

Frederika laid her sweet commands on him one evening, d bade him entertain the company by reading *Hamlet* oud. He did so, to the great enjoyment of all, especially ederika, "who from time to time sighed deeply, and a ssing colour tinged her cheeks." Was she thinking of poor helia—placing herself in that forlorn position?

> "For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
> Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood!"

e may have had some presentiment of her fate. The ap- ause, however, which her lover gained was proudly accepted her, "and in her graceful manner she did not deny herself e little pride of having shone through him."

It is quite certain that his passion gave him vague uneasi- ss. "How happy is he," he writes, "whose heart is light d free! Courage urges us to confront difficulties and ngers, and only by great labour are great joys obtained. at, perhaps, is the worst I have to allege against love. ey say it gives courage: never! The heart that loves is ak. When it beats wildly in the bosom, and tears fill our es, and we sit in an inconceivable rapture as they flow— en, oh! then, we are so weak, that flower-chains bind us, t because they have the strength of any magic, but because tremble lest we break them."

The mention of *Hamlet* leads us naturally into the society ere he sought oblivion, when Frederika quitted Strasburg. er departure, he confesses, was a *relief* to him. She herself t on leaving that the end of their romance was approaching. e plunged into gaiety to drown tormenting thoughts. "If u could but see me," he wrote to Salzmann, after describing dance which had made him forget his fever: "my whole ing was sunk in dancing. And yet could I but say: I am ppy; that would be better than all. 'Who is't can say I at the worst?' says Edgar (in *Lear*). That is some mfort, dear friend. My heart is like a weathercock when a orm is rising, and the gusts are changeable." Some days er he wrote: "All is not clear in my soul. I am too riously awake not to feel that I grasp at shadows. And

yet . . . To-morrow at seven my horse is saddled, and th
adieu!"

Besides striving to drown in gaiety these tormenting thoughts he also strove to divert them into channels of nobler activi stimulated thereto by the Shakspearian fanaticism of his n friend Lenz.

Reinhold Lenz, irrevocably forgotten as a poet, whom vain effort on the part of Gruppe has tried to bring once mo into public favour,[1] is not without interest to the student German literature during the *Sturm und Drang* period. H came to Strasburg in 1770, accompanying two young nob men as their tutor, and mingling with them in the best socie of the place; and, by means of Salzmann, was introduced the Club. Although he had commenced by translating Pop *Essay on Criticism*, he was, in the strictest sense of the wor one of the Shakspeare bigots, who held to the severest orth doxy in Shakspeare as a first article of their creed, and wh not only maintained the Shakspeare clowns to be incompa able, but strove to imitate them in their language. Many extravagant jest, and many an earnest discussion served vary the hours. It is not easy for us to imagine the effe which the revelation of such a mind as Shakspeare's mu have produced on the young Germans. His colossal streng profundity of thought, originality and audacity of language, beauty, pathos, sublimity, wit, and wild overflowing humo and his accuracy of observation as well as depth of insig into the mysteries of passion and character, were qualiti which no false criticism, and, above all, no national tas prevented Germans from appreciating. It was very differe in France. There an established form of art, with whi national pride was identified, and an established set of criti rules, upon which Taste securely rested, necessarily ma Shakspeare appear like a Cyclops of Genius—a monst though of superhuman proportions. Frenchmen could r help being shocked at many things in Shakspeare; yet ev those who were most outraged, were also most amazed at t pearls to be found upon the dung-hill. In Germany the pea alone were seen. French taste had been pitilessly ridicul by Lessing. The French Tragedy had been contrasted w Shakspeare, and pronounced unworthy of comparison. the Germans, therefore, Shakspeare was a standard borne

[1] GRUPPE: *Reinhold Lenz Leben und Werke:* 1861.

who combated against France, and his greatness was ognised with something of wilful preference. The state German literature also rendered his influence the more odigious. Had Shakspeare been first revealed to *us* when . Hayley was the great laureat of the age, we should have something of the eagerness with which the young and lent minds of Germany received this greatest poet of all es.

I am fortunately enabled, thanks to Otto Jahn, to give here very interesting illustration of the enthusiasm with which ese young men studied Shakspeare; and among the new terials this Biography contains, perhaps nothing will be so lcome in England. It is an oration prepared by Goethe one of the meetings of the Shakspeare-circle before ntioned. To hear the youth of one-and-twenty thus quent on his great idol, lets us intimately into the secret his mental condition.

ORATION ON SHAKSPEARE.

'In my opinion, the noblest of our sentiments is the hope continuing to live, even when destiny seems to have carried back into the common lot of non-existence. This life, ntlemen, is much too short for our souls; the proof is, that ry man, the lowest as well as the highest, the most incap- e as well as the most meritorious, will be tired of anything ner than of life, and that no one reaches the goal towards ich he set out; for however long a man may be prosperous his career, still at last, and often when in sight of the ed-for object, he falls into a grave, which God knows who for him, and is reckoned as nothing. Reckoned as hing? I? who am everything to myself, since I know ngs only through myself! So cries every one who is truly scious of himself; and makes great strides through this —a preparation for the unending course above. Each, it rue, according to his measure. If one sets out with the diest walking pace, the other wears seven-leagued boots outstrips him; two steps of the latter are equal to a 's journey of the former. Be it as it may with him of the en-leagued boots, this diligent traveller remains our friend our companion, while we are amazed at the gigantic steps he other and admire them, follow his footsteps and measure n with our own.

"Let us up and be going, gentlemen! To watch a soli
march like this enlarges and animates our souls more tha
stare at the thousand footsteps of a royal procession. To-
we honour the memory of the greatest traveller on this jour
of life, and thereby we are doing an honour to oursel
When we know how to appreciate a merit we have the germ
it within ourselves. Do not expect that I should say much
methodically; mental calmness is no garment for a festiv
and as yet I have thought little upon Shakspeare; to h
glimpses, and, in exalted passages, to feel, is the utmost I h
been able to obtain. The first page of his that I read m
me his for life; and when I had finished a single play, I st
like one born blind, on whom a miraculous hand bestows si
in a moment. I saw, I felt, in the most vivid manner, t
my existence was infinitely expanded, everything was now
known to me, and the unwonted light pained my eyes.
little and little I learned to see, and, thanks to my recept
genius, I continue vividly to feel what I have won. I did
hesitate for a moment about renouncing the classical dra
The unity of place seemed to me irksome as a prison,
unities of action and of time burthensome fetters to
imagination; I sprang into the open air, and felt for the
time that I had hands and feet. And now that I see h
much injury the men of rule did me in their dungeon, and h
many free souls still crouch there, my heart would burst
did not declare war against them, and did not seek daily
batter down their towers.

"The Greek drama, which the French took as their mo
was both in its inward and outward character such, tha
would be easier for a marquis to imitate Alcibiades than
Corneille to follow Sophocles. At first an *intermezzo* of di
worship, then a mode of political celebration, the tragedy
sented to the people great isolated actions of their fathers
the pure simplicity of perfection; it stirred thorough and g
emotions in souls because it was itself thorough and gr
And in what souls? Greek souls! I cannot explain to my
what that expresses, but I feel it, and appeal for the sak
brevity to Homer and Sophocles, and Theocritus; they h
taught me to feel it.

"Now hereupon I immediately ask: Frenchmen, what
thou do with the Greek armour? it is too strong and too h
for thee.

"Hence, also, French tragedies are parodies of themse

ow regularly everything goes forward, and how they are as e each other as shoes, and tiresome withal, especially in the rth act,—all this, gentlemen, you know from experience, d I say nothing about it.

'Who it was that first thought of bringing great political ions on the stage I know not; this is a subject which ords an opportunity to the amateur for a critical treatise. doubt whether the honour of the invention belongs to akspeare; it is enough that he brought this species of ma to the pitch which still remains the highest, for few s can reach it, and thus it is scarcely to be hoped that any e will see beyond it or ascend above it. Shakspeare, my end! if thou wert yet amongst us, I could live nowhere but h thee; how gladly would I play the subordinate character a Pylades, if thou wert Orestes; yes, rather than be a nerated high-priest in the temple of Delphos.

'I will break off, gentlemen, and write more to-morrow, for m in a strain which, perhaps, is not so edifying to you as it neartfelt by me.

'Shakspeare's dramas are a beautiful casket of rarities, in ich the history of the world passes before our eyes on the isible thread of time. His plots, to speak according to the linary style, are no plots, for his plays all turn upon the lden point (which no philosopher has yet seen and defined), which the peculiarity of our *ego*, the pretended freedom of r will, clashes with the necessary course of the *whole*. But r corrupt taste so beclouds our eyes, that we almost need a w creation to extricate us from this darkness.

'All French writers, and Germans infected with French te, even Wieland, have in this matter, as in several others, ne themselves little credit. Voltaire, who from the first de a profession of vilifying everything majestic, has here o shown himself a genuine Thersites. If I were Ulysses, back should writhe under my sceptre. Most of these tics object especially to Shakspeare's characters. And cry, nature, nature! nothing so natural as Shakspeare's n.

'There I have them all by the neck. Give me air that nay speak! He rivalled Prometheus, and formed his men ture by feature, only of *colossal size;* therein lies the reason t we do not recognise our brethren; and then he animated m with the breath of *his* mind; *he* speaks in all of them, l we perceive their relationship.

"And how shall our age form a judgment as to what natural? Whence can we be supposed to know nature, who, from youth upwards, feel everything within us, and s everything in others, laced up and decorated? I am oft ashamed before Shakspeare, for it often happens that at t first glance I think to myself I should have done that d ferently; but soon I perceive that I am a poor sinner, th nature prophecies through Shakspeare, and that my men a soap-bubbles blown from romantic fancies.

"And now to conclude,—though I have not yet begu What noble philosophers have said of the world, applies al to Shakspeare;—namely, that what we call evil is only t other side, and belongs as necessarily to its existence and the Whole, as the torrid zone must burn and Lapland free in order that there may be a temperate region. He leads through the whole world, but we, enervated, inexperienc men, cry at every strange grasshopper that meets us: He w devour us.

"Up, gentlemen! sound the alarm to all noble souls wh are in the Elysium of so-called good taste, where drowsy tedious twilight they are half alive, half not alive, with passio in their hearts and no marrow in their bones; and becau they are not tired enough to sleep, and yet are too idle to active, loiter and yawn away their shadowy life between myr and laurel bushes."

In these accents we hear the voice of the youth who wro *Götz with the Iron Hand*. If the reader turn to the *Au biography* and see there what is said of Shakspeare, he w be able to appreciate what I meant in saying that the *tone* the *Autobiography* is unlike the reality. The tone of th speech is that of the famous *Sturm und Drang* (storm a stress) period, which in after life became so very objectiona to him. How differently Schiller was affected by Shakspe may be read in the following confession:—"When at an ea age I first grew acquainted with this poet, I was indignant his coldness—indignant with the insensibility which allow him to jest and sport amidst the highest pathos. Led by knowledge of more modern poets to seek the poet in his work to meet and sympathise with his heart; to reflect with him o his object; it was insufferable to me that this poet gave nothing of himself. Many years had he my reverence—c tainly my earnest study, before I could comprehend his indivi ality. I was not yet fit to comprehend nature at first hand

The enthusiasm for Shakspeare naturally incited Goethe
dramatic composition, and, besides *Götz* and *Faust* before
entioned, we find in his notebook the commencement of
drama on *Julius Cæsar*.

Three forms rise up from out the many influences of Stras-
urg into distinct and memorable importance: Frederika;
erder; the Cathedral. An exquisite woman, a noble thinker,
d a splendid monument, were his guides into the regions of
assion, Poetry, and Art. The influence of the Cathedral was
eat enough to make him write the little tractate on German
chitecture *D. M. Erwini à Steinbach;* the enthusiasm of
nich was so incomprehensible to him in after years, that
was with difficulty persuaded to reprint the tractate
nong his works. Do we not see here—as in so many
her traits — how different the youth is from the child
d man?

How thoroughly he had entered into the spirit of Gothic
chitecture is indicated by the following anecdote. In com-
ny with some friends he was admiring the Strasburg Cathe-
al, when one remarked, "What a pity it was not finished,
d that there should be only one steeple." Upon this he
swered, "It is a matter of equal regret to me to see this
litary steeple unfinished; the four spiral staircases leave off
o abruptly at the top; they ought to have been surmounted
four light pinnacles, with a higher one rising in the centre
stead of the clumsy mass." Some one, turning round to
n, asked him who told him *that?* "The tower itself," he
swered; "I have studied it so long, so attentively, and with
much love, that it has at last confessed to me its open
cret." Whereupon his questioner informed him that the
ver had spoken truly, and offered to show him the original
tches, which still existed among the archives.

Inasmuch as in England many professed admirers of archi-
ture appear imperfectly acquainted with the revival of the
te for Gothic art, it may not be superfluous to call attention
the fact that Goethe was among the very first to recognise
peculiar beauty of that style, at a period when classical,
pseudo-classical, taste was everywhere dominant. It appears
t he was in friendly correspondence with Sulpiz Boisserée,
artist who made the restored design of the Cologne
thedral; from whom he doubtless learned much. And we
by the *Wahlverwandtschaften* that he had a portfolio of
igns illustrative of the principle of the pointed style. This

was in 1809, when scarcely any one thought of the Gothic long before Victor Hugo had written his *Notre Dame de Paris* long before Pugin and Ruskin had thrown their impassioned energy into this revival; at a time when the church in Langham Place was thought beautiful, and the Temple Church was considered an eyesore.

And now he was to leave Strasburg,—to leave Frederika. Much as her presence had troubled him of late, in her absence he only thought of her fascinations. He had not ceased to love her, though he already felt she never would be his. He went to say adieu. "Those were painful days, of which I remember nothing. When I held out my hand to her from my horse, the tears were in her eyes, and I felt sad at heart. As I rode along the footpath to Drusenheim a strange phantasy took hold of me. I saw in my mind's eye my own figure riding towards me, attired in a dress I had never worn—pike grey with gold lace. I shook off this phantasy, but eight years afterwards I found myself on the very road, going to visit Frederika, and that too in the very dress which I had seen myself in, in this phantasm, although my wearing it was quite accidental." The reader will probably be somewhat sceptical respecting the dress, and will suppose that the prophetic detail was afterwards transferred to the vision by the imagination of later years.[1]

And so farewell Frederika, bright and exquisite vision of a poet's youth! We love you, pity you, and think how differently *we* should have treated you! We make pilgrimages to Sesenheim as to Vaucluse, and write legibly our names in the Visitors' Album, to testify so much. And we read, not without emotion, narratives such as that of the worthy philologist Näke, who in 1822 made the first pilgrimage,[2] thinking as he went, of this enchanting Frederika (and somewhat also of a private Frederika of his own), examined every rood of the ground, dined meditatively at the inn (with a passing reflection that the bill was larger than he anticipated), took coffee with the pastor's successor; and, with a sentiment touching in a philologist, bore away a sprig of the jessamine which in days gone by had been tended by the white hands of Frederika and placed it in his pocket-book as an imperishable souvenir.

[1] The correspondence with the Frau von Stein contains a letter written to him a day or two after this visit, but, singularly enough, *no* mention of the coincidence.

[2] *Die Wahlfahrt nach Sesenheim.*

BOOK THE THIRD

1771 TO 1775

"Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille,
Sich ein Charakter in dem Strom der Welt."

"Trunken müssen wir alle seyn:
Jugend ist Trunkenheit ohne Wein."

"They say best men are moulded out of faults,
And, for the most, become much more the better
For being a little bad."—*Shakspeare.*

CHAPTER I

DR. GOETHE'S RETURN

r the 25th or 28th of August 1771, he quitted Strasburg. s way led through Mannheim; and there he was first illed by the beauty of ancient masterpieces, some of which saw in plaster cast. Whatever might be his predilection Gothic Art, he could not view these casts without feeling nself in presence of an Art in its way also divine; and his evious study of Lessing lent a peculiar interest to the okoon group, now before his eyes.

Passing on to Mainz he fell in with a young wandering rpist, and invited the ragged minstrel to Frankfurt, promising n a public in the Fair, and a lodging in his father's house. was lucky that he thought of acquainting his mother with s invitation. Alarmed at its imprudence, she secured a ging in the town, and so the boy wanted neither shelter patronage.

Rath Goethe was not a little proud of the young Doctor. was also not a little disturbed by the young Doctor's nners; and often shook his ancient respectable head at opinions which exploded like bombshells in the midst of ventions. Doctoral gravity was but slightly attended to this young hero of the *Sturm und Drang*. The revolu- nary movement known by the title of the *Storm and Stress* s then about to astonish Germany, and to startle all con- tions, by works such as Gerstenberg's *Ugolino*, Goethe's *tz von Berlichingen*, and Klinger's *Sturm und Drang* (from

whence the name). The wisdom and extravagance of thi age united in one stream: the masterly criticisms of Lessing,— the enthusiasm for Shakspeare,—the mania for Ossian and th northern mythology,—the revival of ballad literature,—and im tations of Rousseau, all worked in one rebellious current again established authority. There was one universal shout f Nature. With the young, Nature seemed to be a compoun of volcanoes and moonlight; her force explosion, her beau sentiment. To be insurgent and sentimental, explosive an lachrymose, were the true signs of genius. Everythi established was humdrum. Genius, abhorrent of humdru would neither spell correctly, nor write correctly, nor deme itself correctly. It would be *German*—lawless, rude, an natural. Lawless it was, and rude it was, but not natur according to the nature of any reputable type.

It is not easy, in the pages of the *Autobiography*, to dete in Goethe an early leader of the *Sturm und Drang;* but it easy enough to detect this in other sources. Here is a glimps in a letter from Mayer of Lindau (one of the Strasbu set) to Salzmann, worth chapters of the *Autobiography* such a point. "*O Corydon, Corydon quæ te dementia cep* According to the chain in which our ideas are linked togeth *Corydon* and *dementia* put me in mind of the extravaga Goethe. He is still at Frankfurt, is he not?"

That such a youth, whose wildness made friends nicknan him the "bear" and the "wolf," could have been who pleasing to his steady, formal father, is not to be expecte Yet the worthy sire was not a little proud of his son's attai ments. The verses, essays, notes, and drawings which h accumulated during the residence in Strasburg were ve gratifying to him. He began to arrange them with scrupulo neatness, hoping to see them shortly published. But the po had a virtue, perhaps of all virtues the rarest in youth writers,—a reluctance to appear in print. Seeing, as we da see, the feverish alacrity with which men accede to th extremely imaginary request, "request of friends," and daun lessly rush into print,—seeing the obstinacy with which th cling to all they have written, and insist on what they ha written being printed—Goethe's reluctance demands an e planation. And, if I may interpret according to my o experience, the explanation is, that his delight in compositi was rather the pure delight of intellectual activity, than delight in the result: delight, not in the *work*, but in t

orking. Thus, no sooner had he finished a poem than his terest in it began to fade; and he passed on to another. hus it was that he left so many works fragments, his interest aving been exhausted before the whole was completed.

He had a small circle of literary friends to whom he com- unicated his productions, and this was publication enough r him. We shall see him hereafter, in Weimar, writing lely for a circle of friends, and troubling himself scarcely all about a public. It was necessary for him to occupy mself with some work which should absorb him, as *Götz* did this time, for only in work could he forget the pain, almost morse, which followed his renunciation of Frederika. If at rasburg he had felt that an end was approaching to this eet romance, at Frankfurt, among family connections, and th new prospects widening before him, he felt it still more. e wrote to her. Unhappily that letter is not preserved. would have made clear much that is now conjectural. Frederika's answer," he says, "to the letter in which I had dden her adieu, tore my heart. I now, for the first time, came aware of her bereavement, and saw no possibility of eviating it. She was ever in my thoughts; I felt that she s wanting to me; and, worst of all, I could not forgive yself! Gretchen had been taken from me; Annchen had t me; but now, for the first time, I was guilty; I had ounded, to its very depths, one of the most beautiful and nder of hearts. And that period of gloomy repentance, bereft the love which had so invigorated me, was agonising, in- pportable. But man will live; and hence I took a sincere erest in others, seeking to disentangle their embarrassments, d to unite those about to part, that they might not feel what elt. Hence I got the name of the 'Confidant,' and also, account of my wanderings, I was named the 'Wanderer.' nder the broad open sky, on the heights or in the valleys, the fields and through the woods, my mind regained some its calmness. I almost lived on the road, wandering tween the mountains and the plains. Often I went, alone in company, right through my native city as though I were tranger in it, dining at one of the great inns in the High eet, and after dinner pursuing my way. I turned more n ever to the open world and to Nature; there alone I nd comfort. During my walks I sang to myself strange mns and dithyrambs. One of these, the *Wanderer's urmlied*, still remains. I remember singing it aloud in an

impassioned style amid a terrific storm. The burden of th rhapsody is that a man of genius must walk resolutely throug the storms of life, relying solely on himself;" a burden whic seems to give expression to what he then felt respecting h relation to Frederika.

Although we have no exact knowledge of the circumstance from the height of which to judge his conduct, the questio must be put, Why did he not marry Frederika? It is a que tion often raised, and as often sophistically answered. By on party he is angrily condemned; disingenuously absolved b another. But he himself acknowledged his fault. He himse never put forth any excuse. He does not hint at dispari of station, he does not say there were objections from h parents. He makes *no* excuse, but confesses the wrong, an blames himself without sophistication. Yet the excuses h would not suggest, partisans have been eager to suggest f him. Some have sought far and wide in the gutters of scand for materials of defence. One gets up a story about Frederik being seduced by a Catholic priest; whence it is argued th Goethe could not be expected to marry one so frail; when also it follows, by way of counterblast, that it was *his* desertio which caused her fall.[1] The basis of fact on which this l is reared (there is usually some basis, even for the wildest lies is that Frederika brought up the orphan child of her sist Salome.

Let me endeavour, without sophistication, to state the re case, at least as far as the imperfect evidence admits of judgment. It seems always to have been forgotten by th many writers who have discussed this topic, that our judgme is misled by the artistic charm which he has thrown over th narrative: we fail to separate the Fact from the Fiction; w read the poem he has made up from his early experienc and read it as if the poem were an unvarnished record of th experience. He has painted Frederika so charmingly; he h told the story of their simple youthful love with so muc grace, and quiet emotion; he has made us believe so entire in the Idyl, that our sympathies are rudely disturbed wh we find the Idyl is not to end in a marriage.

But if we consider the case calmly, divesting it, as muc as possible, of the illusive suggestions of romance, we ma perhaps, come to the conclusion, that it was, after all, on

[1] Strangely enough, although Goethe read the MS. in which Näke repea this story, he takes no notice of it.

"love-affair" between a boy and a girl, a temporary fascination, such as often stirs the affections of youth, without deepening into serious thought of marriage. Doubtless the reader can from his or her own history rapidly recall such an experience; certainly the experience of their friends will supply such cases. If we read the story in this light all is clear. The boy and girl are fascinated by each other; they look into each other's eyes, and are happy; they walk together, talk together, and, when separated, think of each other. But they never think of marriage; or think of it vaguely as a remote contingency. Young love's dream is enough for them. They are pained at parting; perhaps all the more so, because they dimly feel that the awakening is at hand. But there is a sort of tacit understanding that marriage is not the issue to be looked for. Had anyone hinted to either Goethe or Frederika that their passion was but a "youthful stirring of the blood," and not an eternal union of souls, they would assuredly have resented it with emphatic denial. Yet so it was. Goethe soon consoled himself; and there is positive evidence that Frederika, shortly afterwards, allowed herself to be consoled by Lenz.

Such, after mature deliberation, I believe to have been the real story. When in old age Goethe, reviewing the pleasant dreams of youth, and weaving them into an artistic narrative, knowedly half fiction, came to that episode with Frederika, he thought of it as we all think of our early loves, with a mingled tenderness and pain; his imagination was kindled, and he turned his experience into a poem. But the fact thus idealised was a very ordinary fact; the story thus poetised was a very common story, and could be told by ninety out of every hundred students, who do *not* marry the idol of the first university term. That Goethe, with his affectionate sensitive nature, was for a time in love with Frederika, is possible. It is certain that whatever the agitation of his feelings, they were not *deeply* moved; she had laid no firm hold of his soul; there were none of those ties between them which grow stronger with advancing time.

No sooner had he made this decisively clear to himself, than he wrote to Frederika to tell her so. No woman can be given up without feeling pain, and probably Frederika's affections were far more deeply engaged than his were; nevertheless, in spite of the pain she doubtless felt, and pathetically expressed in her letter to him, we find her presently engaged

in another "love-affair," with the poet Lenz, which, thou it ended in a breach, certainly went so far as the exchan of vows; and, according to Lenz, the growth of the passi was rapid. "It was with us both," he writes to his frien "as with Cæsar: *veni, vidi, vici.* Through unconscio causes grew our confidence—and now it is sworn, and ind soluble." When, in after years, Goethe visited Frederik she—having long given up Lenz,—whose madness must ha made her rejoice in her escape—told him of Lenz havi pretended to be in love with her, but omitted to say anythi about her own reciprocity; and she omitted this from motiv which every woman will appreciate. But however obscure t story may be, it seems certain that at least for a short time s believed in and returned Lenz's passion.[1]

After this exposition of what I conceive to be the real ca it will be easy to answer the outcry of the sentimentalists again Goethe's "faithlessness" and his "cruel treatment of Frec rika," without recurring to the excuses sometimes put for that to have been faithful to her he must have been faithle to his genius; and that it was better one woman's he should be broken (which it was *not*) than that the poe experience should be narrowed within the small circle domestic life. It is a mistake to speak of faithlessness at a We may regret that he did not feel the serious affection whi would have claimed her as a wife; we may upbraid him t the thoughtlessness with which he encouraged the sentimen relation; but he was perfectly right to draw back from engagement which he felt his love was not strong enou properly to fulfil. It seems to me that he acted a more mo part in relinquishing her, than if he had swamped this less in a greater wrong, and escaped one breach of faith by still greater breach of faith—a reluctant, because unlovi marriage. The thoughtlessness of youth, and the headlo impetus of passion, frequently throw people into rash engag ments; and in these cases the *formal* morality of the wor more careful of externals than of truth, declares it to nobler for such rash engagements to be kept, even when t rashness is felt by the engaged, than that a man's hon should be stained by a withdrawal. The letter thus tal precedence of the spirit. To satisfy this prejudice a life sacrificed. A miserable marriage rescues the honour; a

[1] For full details see GRUPPE: *Reinhold Lenz, Leben und Werke*, 18 pp. 11 *sq.*

o one throws the burden of that misery upon the prejudice. am not forgetting the necessity of being stringent against the ommon thoughtlessness of youth in forming such relations; ut I say that this thoughtlessness once having occurred, eprobate it as we may, the pain which a separation may ring had better be endured, than evaded by an unholy arriage, which cannot come to good.

Frederika herself must have felt so too, for never did a ord of blame escape her; and we shall see how affection-tely she welcomed him, when they met after the lapse of ears. This, however, does not absolve him from the blame f having thoughtlessly incurred the responsibility of her affec-on. That blame he must bear. The reader will apportion according as he estimates the excuses of temperament, and ne common thoughtlessness of us all in such matters.

Although I think Goethe's conduct in this matter perfectly pright, and justifiable from a far more serious point of view an that of being faithful to his genius, I am not at all isposed to acquiesce in the assumption that marriage with rederika would have crippled his genius by narrowing his mpathies. The cause of his relinquishing her was the want f a sufficiently powerful love; and that also is his justifica-on. Had he loved her enough to share a life with her, his xperience of woman might have been less extensive, but it ould assuredly have gained an element it wanted. It would ave been deepened. He had experienced, and he could aint (no one better), the exquisite devotion of woman to an; but he had scarcely ever felt the peculiar tender-ess of man for woman, when that tenderness takes the rm of vigilant protecting fondness. He knew little, and at not until late in life, of the subtle interweaving of bit with affection, which makes life saturated with love, nd love itself become dignified through the serious aims life. He knew little of the exquisite *companionship* of o souls striving in emulous spirit of loving rivalry to become tter, to become wiser, teaching each other to soar. He new little of this; and the kiss he feared to press upon the ving lips of Frederika—the life of sympathy he refused to are with her—are wanting to the greatness of his works.

In such a mood as that which followed the rupture with ederika, it is not wonderful if Frankfurt and the practice law were odious to him. Nothing but hard work could him good: and he worked hard. From the Herder

Correspondence it appears that he read Greek writers with some eagerness, his letters being studded with citations from Plato, Homer, and Pindar. *Die griechen sind mein einzig studium*, he says. We find him also working at *Götz von Berlichingen*. Gothic Art, a kindred subject, occupies him, and from thence, by an easy transition, he passes to the Bible to study it anew. The results of this study are seen in two little tractates published in 1773, one called *Brief des Pastor's zu . . . an den neuen Pastor zu . . .*; the other, *Zwo wichtige bisher unerörtete biblische Fragen, zum erstenmal gründlich beantwortet von einem Landgeistlichen in Schwaben*. The influence of Fräulein von Klettenberg is traceable in the religious sentiment of these works; while his own affectionate nature speaks in the tolerance preached. Of the two biblical questions, one goes to prove that it was not the ten commandments which stood on the tables of Moses, but ten laws of the Israelitish-Jehovah covenant. The second is an answer, by no means clear, to the question: "What is it to speak with tongues?" which he explains as a "speech of the Spirit, more than pantomime, and yet inarticulate."

Among the friends to whom he communicated his plans and ideas, two must be named: Schlosser, whom we have seen at Leipsic, and Merck, whose influence was very beneficial. The portrait sketched of this remarkable man in the *Autobiography* gives a very incorrect idea to those who cannot control what is there said by other direct evidence; especially calculated to mislead is the nickname "Mephistopheles Merck," for whatever tendency to sarcasm Merck may have indulged in, it is quite clear that his admiration was generous and warm, his influence over Goethe being uniformly one of friendly incitement, or of friendly warning.

Johann Heinrich Merck was born in Darmstadt, 1741. The son of an apothecary, he raised himself to the companionship of princes. He was at this time *Kriegsrath* in Darmstadt and in correspondence with most of the notabilities of the day; among them Herder, who had the highest opinion of his abilities, and the most jealous anxiety to retain his friendship, fearing lest the new friendship with Goethe should step between them; as, indeed, eventually it did. Merck, whose significance in the history of German literature is considerable and whose correspondence shows him to have critically influenced men greatly his superiors in production, was one of the most zealous propagators of English literature. His

began by translating Hutcheson *On Beauty*, Addison's *Cato*, and Shaw's *Travels in the Levant*. The Shakspeare neophytes found him prepared to share their enthusiasm; and when, in 1772, he persuaded Schlosser to undertake the editing of the *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeigen*, and to make it the Moniteur of the *Sturm und Drang* party, his own contributions were numerous and valuable.[1] His official duties do not seem to have pressed very heavily upon him, for he made frequent excursions, and seems to have stayed some time at Frankfurt. The friendship between him and Goethe was warm. He saw more deeply than Herder into this singular genius, and on many critical occasions we find him always manifesting a clear insight, and a real regard.

The *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeigen* was a point of reunion, bringing Goethe into relation with many persons of ability. It also afforded him an opportunity of exercising himself in criticism. Thirty-five of the articles he wrote for this journal have been collected into his works, where the curious student will seek them. In these studies the time flew swiftly. He had recommenced horse and sword exercise, and Klopstock having made skating illustrious, it soon became an amusement of which he was never tired; all day long and deep into the night he was to be seen wheeling along; and as the full moon rose above the clouds over the wide nocturnal fields of ice, and the night wind rushed at his face, and the echo of his movements came with ghostly sound upon his ear, he seemed to be in Ossian's world. Indoors there were studies and music. "Will you ask my violoncello master," he writes to Salzmann, "if he still has the sonatas for two basses, which I played with him, and if so, send them to me as quickly as convenient? I practise this art somewhat more earnestly than before. As to my other occupations, you will have gathered from my drama (*Götz*), that the purposes of my soul are becoming more earnest."

It has before been hinted that *Sturm und Drang*, as it manifested itself in the mind and bearing of the young doctor, was but very moderately agreeable to the old Rath Goethe; and whatever sympathy we may feel with the poet, yet, as we are all parents, or hope to be, let us not permit our sympathy to become injustice; let us admit that the

[1] See for further information the work of STAHR: *Johann Heinrich Merck. Ein Denkmal.*

old Rath had considerable cause for parental uneasiness, and let us follow the son to Wetzlar without flinging any hard words at his father.

CHAPTER II

GÖTZ VON BERLICHINGEN

ALTHOUGH *Götz* was not published until the summer of 1773, it was written in the winter of 1771, or, to speak more accurately, the first of the three versions into which the work was shaped was written at this time. We must bear in mind that there are three versions: the first is entitled the *Geschichte Gottfriedens von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand, dramatisirt*,[1] which was not published until very many years afterwards. The second is entitled *Götz von Berlichingen, Schauspiel*,[2] and is the form in which the work was *originally* published. The third is an adaptation of this second piece, with a view to stage representation, which adaptation was made with Schiller during the efforts to create a national stage at Weimar.[3]

The first form is the one I most admire, and the one which biographically, has most interest. While he is on his way to Wetzlar we will open his portfolio, and take out this manuscript for closer scrutiny, instead of waiting till he publishes the second version. From a letter to Salzmann we learn that it was written in November 1771. "My whole genius is given to an undertaking which makes me forget Shakspeare, Homer, everything; I am dramatising the history of the noblest of Germans, to rescue the memory of a brave man; and the labour it costs me kills time here, which is at present so necessary for me." He gives the following account of its composition, in the *Autobiography*:—"An unceasing interest in Shakspeare's works had so expanded my mind, that the narrow compass of the stage and the short time allotted for a representation, seemed to me insufficient for the development of an important idea. The life of *Götz von Berlichingen*, written by himself, suggested the historic mode of treatment, and my imagination took so wide a sweep, that my dramatic construction also went beyond all theatrical limits in seeking more and more to approach life. I had, as I proceeded

[1] *Werke*, vol. xxxiv. of the edition of 1840.
[2] *Werke*, vol. ix.
[3] *Werke*, vol. xxxv.

alked the matter over with my sister, who was interested
eart and soul in such subjects ; and I so often renewed this
onversation, without taking any steps towards beginning the
ork, that at last she impatiently and urgently entreated me
ot to be always talking, but, once for all, to set down upon
aper that which must be so distinct before my mind.
Moved by this impulse, I began one morning to write,
ithout having made any previous sketch or plan. I wrote
he first scenes, and in the evening they were read aloud to
Cornelia. She greatly applauded them, but doubted whether
should go on so ; nay, she even expressed a decided un-
elief in my perseverance. This only incited me the more ;
wrote on the next day, and also on the third. Hope in-
reased with the daily communications, and step by step
verything gained more life as I mastered the conception.
Thus I kept on, without interruption, looking neither back-
ards nor forwards, neither to the right nor to the left ; and
n about six weeks I had the pleasure of seeing the manuscript
itched."

Gottfried von Berlichingen, surnamed of the Iron Hand, was distinguished predatory Burgrave of the sixteenth century ;[1] ne of the last remains of a turbulent, lawless race of feudal arons, whose personal prowess often lent the lustre of romance o acts of brigandage. Gottfried with the Iron Hand was a orthy type of the class. His loyalty was as unshakable as is courage. Whatever his revered emperor thought fit to do, e thought right to be done. Below the emperor he acknow-edged no lord. With his fellow barons he waged continual ar. Against the Bishop of Bamberg, especially, he was equently in arms ; no sooner was a peace arranged with im, than the Bishop of Mainz was attacked. War was his ement. With something of Robin Hood chivalry, he was ound on the side of the weak and persecuted ; unless when ie Kaiser called for his arm, or unless when tempted by a ttle private pillage on his own account. To his strong arm ie persecuted looked for protection. A tailor earns two undred florins by shooting at a mark ; the sum is withheld ; e goes to Götz with a piteous tale ; instantly the Iron Hand utches the recalcitrant debtors travelling that way, and akes them pay the two hundred florins.

[1] Scott by an oversight makes him flourish in the fifteenth century. He was rn in 1482, and thus reached man's estate with the opening of the sixteenth ntury.

It was a tempting subject for a poet of the eighteenth century, this bold chivalrous robber, struggling single-handed against the advancing power of civilisation, this lawless chieftain making a hopeless stand against the Law, and striving to perpetuate the feudal spirit. Peculiarly interesting to the poet was the consecration of *individual* greatness in Götz. Here was a man great not by privilege, but by Nature; his superiority given him by no tradition, by no court favour, but by favour only of his own strong arm and indomitable spirit. And was not the struggle of the whole eighteenth century a struggle for the recognition of individual worth, of Rights against Privileges, of Liberty against Tradition? Such also was the struggle of the sixteenth century. The Reformation was to Religion, what the Revolution was to Politics: a stand against the tyranny of Tradition—a battle for the rights of *individual* liberty of thought and action, against the absolute prescriptions of privileged classes.

In the *Chronicle of Götz von Berlichingen* his deeds are recorded by himself with unaffected dignity. There Goethe found materials, such as Shakspeare found in Holingshed and Saxo-Grammaticus; and used them in the same free spirit. He has dramatised the *chronicle*—made it live and move before us; but he has dramatised a chronicle, not written a drama. This distinction is drawn for a reason which will presently appear.

Viehoff has pointed out the use which has been made of the chronicle, and the various elements which have been added from the poet's own invention. The English reader cannot be expected to feel the same interest in such details as the German reader does; it is enough therefore to refer the curious to the passage,[1] and only cite the characters invented by Goethe; these are Adelheid, the voluptuous fascinating demon; Elizabeth, the noble wife, in whom Goethe's mother saw herself; Maria, a reminiscence of Frederika; Georg, Franz Lerse, Weislingen, and the Gypsies. The death of Götz is also new. The tower mentioned by Goethe is still extant at Heilbronn, under the name of Götzen's Thurm. The rest, including the garden, is the creation of the poet. Götz was confined for only one night in that tower. His death, which according to the play must have happened in 1525, did not occur till 1562, when the

[1] *Goethe's Leben*, vol. ii. pp. 77, 79.

burly old knight, upwards of eighty, died at his castle of Horberg, at peace with all men, and in perfect freedom. His tomb may be seen at the monastery of Schönthal.[1]

Götz was a dramatic chronicle, not a drama. It should never have been called a drama, but left in its original shape with its original title. This would have prevented much confusion; especially with reference to Shakspeare, and his form of dramatic composition. While no one can mistake the *influence* of Shakspeare in this work, there is great laxity of language in calling it Shakspearian; a laxity common enough, but not admissible. Critics are judges who rely on precedents with the rigour of judges on the bench. They pronounce according to precedent. That indeed is their office. No sooner has an original work made its appearance, than one of these two courses is invariably pursued: it is rejected by the critics because it does not range itself under any acknowledged class, and thus is branded because it is not an imitation; or it is quietly classified under some acknowledged head. The latter was the case with *Götz von Berlichingen.* Because it set the unities at defiance, and placed the people beside the nobles on the scene; because instead of declaiming, as in French tragedy, the persons spoke dramatically to the purpose; because, in short, it did *not* range under the acknowledged type of French tragedy, it was supposed to range under the Shakspearian type—the only accepted antagonist to the French.

Is it like Othello? Is it like Macbeth? Is it like Richard II., Henry IV., King John, Julius Cæsar, or any one unquestioned play by Shakspeare? Unless the words "Shakspearian style" are meaningless, people must mean that Götz resembles Shakspeare's plays in the structure and organisation of plot, in the delineation of character, and in the tone of dialogue; yet a cursory review of the play will convince any one that in all these respects it is singularly *unlike* Shakspeare's plays.

In *construction* it differs from Shakspeare, first, as intended to represent an *epoch* rather than a *story;* secondly, as taking the licenses of narrative art, instead of keeping the stage always in view, and submitting to the stern necessities of theatrical representation; thirdly, as wanting in that central unity round which all the persons and events are grouped,

[1] Count Joseph Berlichingen, the present representative of the family, has recently published a *Life of Götz*, but it has not reached me.

so as to form a work of art. It is a succession of scenes a story of episodes.

In the presentation of character the work is no less un Shakspearian. Our national bigotry, indeed, assumes tha every masterly portraiture of character is Shakspearian; a assumption which can hardly maintain itself in the presenc of Sophocles, Racine, and Goethe. Each poet has a manne of his own, and Shakspeare's manner is assuredly not visibl in Götz von Berlichingen. The characters move before u with singular distinctness in their external characteristics, bu they do not, as in Shakspeare, involuntarily betray the inmos secret of their being. We know them by their languag and their acts; we do not know their thoughts, their sel sophistications, their involved and perplexed motives, partiall obscured even to themselves, and seen by us in the cros lights which break athwart their passionate utterances. T take a decisive example: Weislingen is at once ambitious an irresolute, well-meaning and weak.[1] The voice of friendshi awakens remorse in him, and forces him to accept the proffere hand of Götz. He swears never again to enter the bishop palace. But, easily seduced by noble thoughts, he is afte wards seduced as easily by vanity: tempted he falls, turn once more against his noble friend, and dies betrayed an poisoned by the wife to whom he has sacrificed all—die unpitied by others, despicable to himself. This vacillatio is truthful, but not truthfully presented. We who only se the conduct cannot explain it. We stand before an enigm as in real life; not before a character such as Art enable us to see, and see through. It is not the business of A to present enigmas; and Shakspeare, in his strongest, happie moods, contrives to let us see into the wavering depths of th *souls*, while we follow the *actions* of his characters. Contra Weislingen with such vacillating characters as Richard II King John, or Hamlet. The difference is not of degre but of kind.

Nor is the language Shakspearian. It is powerful, pictu esque, clear, dramatic; but it is not pregnant with though obscured in utterance, and heavy with that superfœtation ideas, which is a characteristic and often a fault in Shakspear It has not his redundancy, and prodigal imagery. Indeed is very singular, and as the production of a boy especially s

[1] In his vacillation, Goethe meant to stigmatise his own weakness wi regard to Frederika, as he tells us in the *Wahrheit und Dichtung*.

n the absence of all rhetorical amplification, and of all delight n imagery for its own sake.

It was the first-born of the Romantic School, or rather f the tendency from which that school issued; and its nfluence has been wide-spread. It gave the impulse and irection to Scott's historical genius, which has altered our onceptions of the past, and given new life to history. It nade the Feudal Ages a subject of eager and almost universal nterest. It decided the fate of French tragedy in German terature. But its influence on dramatic art has been, I think, nore injurious than beneficial, and mainly because the disnction between a dramatised chronicle and a drama has been ost sight of.

This injurious influence is traceable in the excessive imortance it has given to local colour, and the intermingling f the historic with the dramatic element. Any one at all cquainted with the productions of the Romantic School in Germany or France will understand this. Goethe's object ot being to write a drama, but to dramatise a picture of ne times, local colour was of primary importance; and ecause he made it so attractive, others have imitated him n departments where it is needless. Nay, critics are so ersuaded of its importance, that they strain every phrase o show us that Shakspeare was also a great painter of times; orgetting that local colouring is an appeal to a critical nd learned audience, not an appeal to the heart and imaination. It is history, not drama. Macbeth in a bag-wig, ith a small sword at his side, made audiences tremble at ne appalling ruin of a mind entangled in crime. The corected costume would not make that tragedy more appalling, ad we not now grown so critical that we demand historical accuracy," where, in the true dramatic age, they only deanded passion. The merest glance at our own dramatic terature will suffice to show the preponderating (and misplaced) influence of History, in the treatment, no less than n the subjects chosen.

Götz, as a picture of the times, is an animated and successl work; but the eighteenth century is on more than one ccasion rudely thrust into the sixteenth; and on this ground Iegel denies its claim to the highest originality. "An original ork appears as the creation of *one* mind, which, admitting no external influence, fuses the whole work in one mould, the events therein exhibited were fused. If it contains

scenes and motives which do not naturally evolve themselv
from the original materials, but are brought together from fi
and wide, then the internal unity becomes necessarily di
stroyed, and these scenes betray the author's subjectivit
For example, Goethe's *Götz* has been greatly lauded fo
originality, nor can we deny that he has therein bold
trampled under foot all the rules and theories which we
then accepted: but the execution is notwithstanding n
thoroughly original. One may detect in it the poverty
youth. Several traits, and even scenes, instead of bein
evolved from the real subject, are taken from the curre
topics of the day. The scene, for example, between Gö
and Brother Martin, which is an allusion to Luther, contain
notions gathered from the controversies of Goethe's own da
when—especially in Germany—people were pitying the monk
because they drank no wine, and because they had passed th
vows of chastity and obedience. Martin, on the other hand
is enthusiastic in his admiration of Götz, and his knightl
career: 'When you return back laden with spoils, and sa
such a one I struck from his horse ere he could discharge h
piece; such another I overthrew, horse and man; and the
returning to your castle, you find your wife.' . . . Here Marti
wipes his eye and pledges the wife of Götz. Not so—no
with such thoughts did Luther begin, but with quite anothe
religious conviction!"

"In a similar style," Hegel continues, "Basedow's pedagog
is introduced. Children, it was said, learn much that is foolis
and unintelligible to them; and the real method was to mak
them learn objects, not names. Karl thus speaks to his fath
just as he would have spoken in Goethe's time from parro
memory: 'Jaxt-hausen is a village and castle upon the Jax
which has been the property and heritage for two hundre
years of the Lords of Berlichingen.' 'Do you know the Lo
of Berlichingen?' asks Götz; the child stares at him, an
from pure erudition, knows not his own father. Götz declar
that *he* knew every pass, pathway, and ford about the plac
before he knew the name of village, castle, or river."[1]

Considered with reference to the age in which it was pr
duced, *Götz von Berlichingen* is a marvellous work: a work
daring power, of vigour, of originality; a work to form
epoch in the annals of letters. Those who now read it as t

[1] HEGEL'S *Vorlesungen über die Æsthetik*, i. p. 382.

ork of the great Goethe may be somewhat disappointed; ut at the time of its appearance no such "magnificent onster" had startled the pedantries and proprieties of the hools;—"a piece," said the critic in the *Teutsche Mercur* of e day, "wherein the three unities are shamefully outraged, nd which is neither a tragedy nor a comedy, and is, notithstanding, the most beautiful, the most captivating monsosity."

The breathless rapidity of movement renders a first reading o hurried for proper enjoyment; but on recurring to the iefly indicated scenes, we are amazed at their fulness of e. How marvellous, for example, is that opening scene of e fifth act (removed from the second version), where Adelid is in the gipsies' tent! Amid the falling snow shines the rid gleam of the gypsy fire, around which move dusky figures; nd this magnificent creature stands shuddering as she finds erself in the company of an old crone who tells her fortune, nile a wild-eyed boy gazes ardently on her and alarms her ith his terrible admiration; the whole scene *lives*, yet the uches which call it into life are briefer than in any other work can remember.

CHAPTER III

WETZLAR

the spring of 1772 he arrived at Wetzlar with *Götz* in his rtfolio, and in his head many wild, unruly thoughts. A ssage in the *Autobiography* amusingly illustrates his conption of the task he had undertaken in choosing to inform e world of his early history. Remember that at Wetzlar he ll in love with Charlotte, and lived through the experience nich was fused into *Werther*, and you will smile as you hear m say: "What occurred to me at Wetzlar is of no great portance, but it may receive a higher interest if the reader ll allow me to give a cursory glance at the history of the nperial Chamber, in order to present to his mind the unvourable moment at which I arrived." This it is to write tobiography when one has outlived almost the memories of uth, and lost sympathy with many of its agitations. At the me he was in Wetzlar he would have looked strangely on y one who ventured to tell him that the history of the

Imperial Chamber was worth a smile from Charlotte; but the time of writing his meagre account of Wetzlar, he had perhaps, some difficulty in remembering what Charlotte's smiles were like. The biographer has a difficult task to make any coherent story out of this episode.[1]

In Wetzlar there were two buildings interesting above all others to us—the Imperial Court of Justice, and *Das teutsche Haus*. The Imperial Court was a Court of Appeal for the whole empire, a sort of German Chancery. Imagine *German* Chancery! In no country does Chancery move with railway speed, and in Germany even the railways are slow. Such a chaotic accumulation of business as this Wetzlar *Kammer-Gericht* presented, was perhaps never seen before. Twenty thousand cases lay undecided on Goethe's arrival, and there were but seventeen lawyers to dispose of them. About sixty was the utmost they could get through in a year, and every year brought more than double that number to swell the heap. Some cases had lingered through a century and a half, and still remained far from a decision. This was not a place to impress the sincere and eminently practical mind of Goethe with a high idea of Jurisprudence.

Das teutsche Haus was one of the remnants of the ancient institution of the *Teutsche Ritter*, or Teutonic Order of Knighthood, celebrated in German mediæval history. The student is familiar with the black armour and white mantles of these warrior-priests, who fought with the zeal of missionaries and the terrible valour of knights, conquering for themselves a large territory, and still greater influence. But it fared with them as with the knights of other Orders. Their strength lay in their zeal; their zeal abated with success. Years brought them increasing wealth, but the spiritual wealth and glory of their cause departed. They became what all corporations inevitably become; and at the time now written of they were reduced to a level with the Knights of Malta. The Order still possessed property in various parts of Germany, and in certain towns there was a sort of steward's house

[1] Fortunately, during the very months in which I was rewriting this work there appeared an invaluable record in the shape of the correspondence between Goethe and Kestner, so often alluded to by literary historians, but imperfectly known. (*Goethe und Werther. Briefe Goethe's, meistens aus seiner Jugendzeit.* Herausgegeben von A. Kestner: 1854.) This book, which is very much in need of an editor, is one of the richest sources to which access has been had for a right understanding of Goethe's youth; and it completes the series of corroborative evidence by which to control the *Autobiography*.

where rents were collected and the business of the Order transacted; this was uniformly styled *das teutsche Haus*. There was such a one in Wetzlar; and the *Amtmann*, or steward, who had superintendence over it, was a certain Herr Buff, on whom the reader is requested to fix his eye, not for any attractiveness of Herr Buff, intrinsically considered, but for the sake of his eldest daughter, Charlotte. She is the heroine of this Wetzlar episode.

Nor was this house the only echo of the ancient Ritterthum in Wetzlar. Goethe, on his arrival, found there another, and more consciously burlesque parody, in the shape of a Round Table and its Knights, bearing such names as St. Amand the Opiniative, Eustace the Prudent, Lubormirsky the Combative, and so forth. It was founded by August Friedrich von Goué, secretary to the Brunswick Embassy, of whom we shall hear more: a wild and whimsical fellow, not without a streak of genius, who drank himself to death. He bore the title of Ritter Coucy, and christened Goethe "*Götz von Berlichingen der Redliche*—Götz the Honest." In an imitation of *Werther* which Goué wrote,[1] a scene introduces this Round Table at one of its banquets at the Tavern; a knight sings a French song, whereupon Götz exclaims, "Thou, a German Ritter, and singest foreign songs!" Another knight asks Götz, "How far have you advanced with the monument which you are to erect to your ancestor?" Götz replies, "It goes quietly forward. Methinks it will be a slap in the face to pedants and the public."[2]

Of this Round Table and its buffooneries, Goethe has merely told us that he entered heartily into the fun at first, but soon wearying of it, relapsed into his melancholy fits. "I have made many acquaintances," says *Werther*, "but have found no society. I know not what there is about me so attractive that people seek my company with so much ardour. They hang about me, though I cannot walk two steps in their path." A description of him, written by Kestner at this period, is very interesting, as it gives us faithfully the impression he produced on his acquaintances before celebrity had thrown its halo round his head, and dazzled the perceptions of his admirers:

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[1] *Masuren, oder der junge Werther. Ein Trauerspiel aus dem Illyrischen.* 1775.

[2] "Ein Stück das Meister und Gesellen auf's Maul schläght." Cited by PELL: *Werther und seine Zeit*, p. 38.

"In the spring there came here a certain Goethe, by trade a *Doctor Juris*, twenty-three years old, only son of a very rich father; in order—this was his father's intention—that he might get some experience in *praxi*, but according to his own intention, that he might study Homer, Pindar, &c., and whatever else his genius, his manner of thinking, and his heart might suggest to him.

"At the very first the *beaux esprits* here announced him to the public as a colleague, and as a collaborator in the new Frankfurt *Gelehrte Zeitung*, parenthetically also as a philosopher, and gave themselves trouble to become intimate with him. As I do not belong to this class of people, or rather am not so much in general society, I did not know Goethe until later, and quite by accident. One of the most distinguished of our *beaux esprits*, the Secretary of Legation Gotter, persuaded me one day to go with him to the village of Garbenheim—a common walk. There I found him on the grass under a tree, lying on his back, while he talked to some persons standing round him—an epicurean philosopher (von Goué, a great genius), a stoic philosopher (von Kielmansegge) and a hybrid between the two (Dr. König)—and thoroughly enjoyed himself. He was afterwards glad that I had made his acquaintance under such circumstances. Many things were talked of—some of them very interesting. This time however, I formed no other judgment concerning him than that he was no ordinary man. You know that I do not judge hastily. I found at once that he had genius, and a lively imagination; but this was not enough to make me estimate him highly.

"Before I proceed further, I must attempt a description of him, as I have since learned to know him better. He has a great deal of talent, is a true genius and a man of character, possesses an extraordinarily vivid imagination, and hence generally expresses himself in images and similes. He often says, himself, that he always speaks figuratively, and can never express himself literally; but that when he is older he hopes to think and say the thought itself as it really is. He is ardent in all his affections, and yet has often great power over himself. His manner of thinking is noble: he is so free from prejudice that he acts as it seems good to him, without troubling himself whether it will please others, whether it is the fashion

[1] *Seiner Handthierung nach.* The word is old German, and now fallen out of use, although the verb *handthieren* is still occasionally used.

nether conventionalism allows it. All constraint is odious him.

"He is fond of children, and can occupy himself with them ry much. He is *bizarre*, and there are several things in his anners and outward bearing which might make him disa- eeable. But with children, women, and many others, he is vertheless a favourite. He has a great respect for the female x. In *principiis* he is not yet fixed, and is still striving after sure system. To say something of this, he has a high inion of Rousseau, but is not a blind worshipper of him. e is not what is called orthodox. Still this is not out of ide or caprice, or for the sake of making himself a *rôle*. On rtain important subjects he opens himself to few, and does t willingly disturb the contentment of others in their own eas. It is true he hates scepticism, strives after truth and ter conviction on certain main points, and even believes that is already convinced as to the weightiest; but as far as I ve observed, he is not yet so. He does not go to church to the sacrament, and prays seldom. For, says he, I am not pocrite enough for that. Sometimes he seems in repose th regard to certain subjects, sometimes just the contrary. e venerates the Christian religion, but not in the form in hich it is presented by our theologians. He believes in a ture life, in a better state of existence. He strives after ith, yet values the feeling of truth more than the demon- ration. He has already done much, and has many acquire- ents, much reading; but he has thought and reasoned still ore. He has occupied himself chiefly with the *belles lettres* d the fine arts, or rather with all sorts of knowledge, except at which wins bread."

On the margin of this rough draught, Kestner adds: "I shed to describe him, but it would be too long a business, r there is much to be said about him. In one word, *he is a ry remarkable man*."

Further on: "I should never have done, if I attempted to scribe him fully."

The Gotter referred to at the opening of this letter was a ung man of considerable culture, with whom Goethe became timate over renewed discussions on art and criticism. "The inions of the ancients," he says, "on these important topics had studied by fits and starts for some years. Aristotle, cero, Quinctilian, Longinus—none were neglected, but they d not help me, for they presupposed an experience which I

needed. They introduced me to a world infinitely rich in works of art; they unfolded the merits of great poets and orators, and convinced me that *a vast abundance of objects must lie before us ere we can think upon them*—that we must accomplish something, nay fail in something, before we can learn our own capacities and those of others. My knowledge of much that was good in ancient literature was merely that of a schoolboy, and by no means vivid. The most splendid orators, it was apparent, had *formed themselves in life*, and we could never speak of them as artists without at the same time mentioning their personal peculiarities. With the poets this was perhaps less the case: but everywhere nature and art came in contact only through life. And thus the result of all my investigations was my old resolution to study Nature, and to allow her to guide me in loving imitation."

Properly to appreciate this passage we must recall the almost universal tendency of the Germans to construct poems in conformity with definite rules, making the poet but a development of the critic. Lessing nobly avowed that he owed all his success to his critical sagacity; Schiller, it is notorious, hampered his genius by fixing on his Pegasus the leaden wings of Kant's philosophy; and Klopstock himself erred in too much criticism. Goethe was the last man to disdain the rich experience of centuries, the last man to imagine that ignorance was an advantageous basis for a poet to stand upon, but he was too thoroughly an artist not to perceive the insufficiency of abstract theories in the production of a work of art which should be the expression of real experience.

In conjunction with Gotter he translated Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, though he speaks slightingly of his share in it. Through Gotter's representations he was also persuaded to publish some little poems in Boie's *Annual*. "I thus[1] came into contact with those," he says, "who, united by youth and talent, afterwards effected so much in various ways. Bürger, Voss, Hölty, the two Counts Stolberg, and several others grouped round Kolpstock; and in this poetical circle, which extended itself more and more, there was developed a tendency which I know not exactly how to name. One might call it that need of independence which always arises in times of peace—that is to say precisely when, properly speaking, one is not

[1] Düntzer in his *Studien* has thrown doubts on this connection with the Göttingen School having originated in Wetzlar. But the point is of no importance, and Goethe's own version is left undisturbed in the text.

dependent. In war we bear restraints of force as well as we can; we are physically, but not morally wounded; the restraint disgraces no one; it is no shame to serve the time; we grow accustomed to suffering both from foes and friends; we have wishes rather than definite views. On the contrary, in times of peace our love of freedom becomes more and more prominent, and the greater our freedom, the more we wish for it; we will tolerate nothing above us; we will not be restrained; no one shall be restrained! This tender, sometimes morbid feeling, assumes in noble souls the form of justice: such a spirit then manifested itself everywhere; and because but few were oppressed, it was wished to free these from occasional oppression. And thus arose a certain moral contest between individuals and the government, which, however laudable its origin, led to unhappy results. Voltaire, reverenced for his conduct in the affair of Calais, had excited great attention; and in Germany Lavater's proceedings against the *Landvogt* (sheriff of the province), had perhaps been even more striking. The time was approaching when dramatists and novelists sought their villains among ministers and official persons; hence arose a world, half real, half imaginary, of action and reaction, in which the most violent accusations and instigations were made by writers of periodical journals, under the garb of justice, who produced the more powerful effect because they made the public imagine that it was itself the tribunal—*a foolish notion, as no public has an executive power;* and in Germany, dismembered as it was, public opinion neither benefited nor injured any one."

It was a period of deep unrest in Europe: the travail of the French revolution. In Germany the spirit of the revolution issued from the study and the lecture hall; it was a literary and philosophic insurrection, with Lessing, Klopstock, Kant, Herder, and Goethe, for leaders. Authority was everywhere attacked, because everywhere it had shown itself feeble, or tyrannous. The majestic peruke of Louis XIV. was lifted by an audacious hand, which thus revealed the baldness so long concealed. No one *now* believed in that Grand Monarque; least of all Goethe, who had *Götz von Berlichingen* in his portfolio, and to whom Homer and Shakspeare were idols. "Send me no more books," writes Werther, "I will no longer be led, incited, spurred by them. There is storm enough in this breast. I want a cradle-melody, and that I have in all its fulness in Homer. How often do I lull with it my raging blood to rest!"

The Kestner Correspondence proves, what before was know that *Werther* is full of biography, and that Goethe was the troubled with fits of depression following upon days of th wildest animal spirits. He was fond of solitude; and th lonely hours passed in reading, or making sketches of th landscape in his rough imperfect style.

"A marvellous serenity has descended on my spirit," write Werther, "to be compared only to the sweet mornings spring which so charm my heart. I am alone, and here li seems delicious in this spot formed for natures like mine. am so happy, so filled with the calm feeling of existence, tha my art suffers. I cannot sketch, yet never was I a greate painter than at this moment! When the dear valley clothe itself in vapour, and the sun shines on the top of my impene trable forest and only a few gleams steal into its sanctuar while I lie stretched in the tall grass by the cascade, curiousl examine the many grasses and weeds, and contemplate th little world of insects with their innumerable forms and colour and feel within me the presence of the Almighty who forme us after his own image, the breath of the All-loving wh sustains us in endless bliss,—my friend, when my eyes a fixed on all these objects, and the world images itself in m soul like the form of a beloved, then I yearn and say: Ah couldst thou but express that which lives within thee, that should be the mirror of thy soul, as thy soul is the mirr of the Infinite God!"

The image of Frederika pursued him. It could only b banished by the presence of another. "When I was a bóy he prettily says in a letter to Salzmann, "I planted a cherr tree, and watched its growth with delight. Spring frost kille the blossoms, and I had to wait another year before th cherries were ripe—then the birds ate them; another year th caterpillars—then a greedy neighbour—then the blight. Neve theless, when I have a garden again, I shall again plant cherry-tree!" He did so:

> "And from Beauty passed to Beauty,
> Constant to a constant change."[1]

The image which was to supplant that of Frederika w none other than that of the Charlotte Buff before mentione Two years before his arrival, her mother had died. The ca of the house and children devolved upon her; she was on

[1] Monckton Milnes.

ixteen, yet good sense, housewifely aptitude, and patient ourage carried her successfully through this task. She had or two years been betrothed to Kestner, secretary to the Hanoverian Legation, then aged four-and-twenty: a quiet, rderly, formal, rational, cultivated man, possessing great nagnanimity, as the correspondence proves, and a dignity hich is in nowise represented in the Albert of *Werther*, from hom we must be careful to distinguish him, in spite of the bvious identity of position. How Goethe came to know Kestner has already been seen; how he came to know Lotte ay now be told.[1] The reader with *Werther* in hand may ompare the narrative there given with this extract from Kest-er's letter to a friend. "It happened that Goethe was at a all in the country where my maiden and I also were. I ould only come late, and was forced to ride after them. My aiden, therefore, drove there in other society. In the carriage as Dr. Goethe, who here first saw Lottchen. He has great nowledge, and has made Nature in her physical and moral spects his principal study, and has sought the true beauty of oth. No woman here had pleased him. Lottchen at once xed his attention. She is young, and although not regularly eautiful, has a very attractive face. Her glance is as bright s a spring morning, and especially it was so that day, for she ves dancing. She was gay, and in quite a simple dress. He oticed her feeling for the beauty of Nature, and her unforced it,—rather humour than wit. He did not know she was etrothed. I came a few hours later; and it is not our custom public to testify anything beyond friendship to each other. He was excessively gay (this he often is, though at other times elancholy); Lottchen quite fascinated him, the more so ecause she took no trouble about it, but gave herself wholly the pleasure of the moment. The next day, of course, oethe called to inquire after her. He had seen her as a vely girl, fond of dancing and pleasure; he now saw her nder another and a better aspect,—in her domestic quality."

To judge from her portrait, Lotte must, in her way, have een a charming creature: not intellectually cultivated, not oetical,—above all, not the sentimental girl described by *Verther;* but a serene, calm, joyous, open-hearted German aiden, an excellent housewife, and a priceless manager. oethe at once fell in love with her. An extract from Kest-

[1] Lotte and Lottchen, it is perhaps not altogether superfluous to add, are e favourite diminutives of Charlotte.

ner's account will tell us more. After describing his engag
ment to Lotte, he adds,—"She is not strictly a brilliant beaut
according to the common opinion; to me she is one: she i
notwithstanding, the fascinating maiden who might have hos
of admirers, old and young, grave and gay, clever and stupi
&c. But she knows how to convince them quickly that the
only safety must be sought in flight or in friendship. One
these, as the most remarkable, I will mention, because h
retains an influence over us. A youth in years (twenty-three
but in knowledge, and in the development of his mental powe
and character, already a man, an extraordinary genius, and
man of character, was here,—as his family believed, for th
sake of studying the law, but in fact to track the footsteps
Nature and Truth, and to study Homer and Pindar. He ha
no need to study for the sake of a maintenance. Quite b
chance, after he had been here some time, he became a
quainted with Lottchen, and saw in her his ideal: he saw h
in her joyous aspect, but was soon aware that this was not h
best side; he learned to know her also in her domestic po
tion, and, in a word, became her adorer. It could not lo
remain unknown to him that she could give him nothing b
friendship; and her conduct towards him was admirable. O
coincidence of taste, and a closer acquaintance with each othe
formed between him and me the closest bond of friendshi
Meanwhile, although he was forced to renounce all hope
relation to Lottchen, and *did* renounce it, yet he could n
with all his philosophy and natural pride, so far master hi
self as completely to repress his inclination. And he h
qualities which might make him dangerous to a woma
especially to one of susceptibility and taste. But Lottch
knew how to treat him so as not to encourage vain hope, a
yet make him admire her manner towards him. His peace
mind suffered: there were many remarkable scenes, in whi
Lottchen's behaviour heightened my regard for her; and
also became more precious to me as a friend; but I was oft
inwardly astonished that love can make such strange creatu
even of the strongest and otherwise the most self-sustain
men. I pitied him, and had many inward struggles; for,
the one hand, I thought that I might not be in a position
make Lottchen so happy as he would make her; but, on t
other hand, I could not endure the thought of losing h
The latter feeling conquered, and in Lottchen I have ne
once been able to perceive a shadow of the same conflict."

Another extract will place this conflict in its true light:—"I am under no further engagement to Lottchen than that nder which an honourable man stands when he gives a young oman the preference above all others, makes known that he esires the like feeling from her, and when she gives it, receives rom her not only this, but a complete acquiescence. This I onsider quite enough to bind an honourable man, especially hen such a relation lasts several years. But in my case there s this in addition, that Lottchen and I have expressly declared urselves, and still do so with pleasure, without any oaths and sseverations." This absence of any *legal* tie between them ust have made Kestner's position far more trying. It gives higher idea both of his generous forbearance and of the ascination exercised by Goethe: for what a position! and ow much nobility on all sides was necessary to prevent petty ealousies ending in a violent rupture! Certain it is that the reatest intimacy and the most affectionate feelings were kept p *without* disturbance. Confident in the honour of his friend nd the truth of his mistress, Kestner never spoiled the rela- ion by a hint of jealousy. Goethe was constantly in Lotte's ouse, where his arrival was a jubilee to the children, who eized hold of him, as children always take loving possession f those who are indulgent to them, and forced him to tell nem stories. It is a pleasant sight to see Goethe with chil- ren; he always shows such hearty fondness for them; and nese brothers and sisters of Lotte were doubly endeared to im because they belonged to her.

One other figure in this Wetzlar set arrests our attention: it s that of a handsome blonde youth, with soft blue eyes and a ettled melancholy expression. His name is Jerusalem, and he s the son of the venerable Abbot of Riddagshausen.[1] He is ere attached as secretary to the Brunswick Legation, a col- eague, therefore, of von Goué. He is deeply read in English terature, and has had the honour of Lessing's friendship; a iendship subsequently expressed in the following terms, when essing, acting as his editor, wrote the preface to his Philo- ophical Essays: "When he came to Wolfenbüttel he gave me is friendship. I did not enjoy it long, but I cannot easily ame one who in so short a space of time excited in me more ffection. It is true I only learned to know one side of his ature, but it was the side which explains all the rest. It was

[1] No Catholic, as this title might seem to imply, but a Protestant; his abbey, ecularised two centuries before, yielded him only a title and revenues.

the desire for clear knowledge; the talent to follow truth t its last consequences; the spirit of cold observation; but a ardent spirit not to be intimidated by truth. . . . How sens tive, how warm, how active this young inquirer was, how tru a man among men, is better known to more intimate friends The Essays which these words introduce are five in numbe the titles are given below.[1]

The melancholy of his disposition led him to think muc of suicide, which he defended on speculative grounds. An this melancholy, and these meditations, were deepened by a unhappy passion for the wife of one of his friends. The issu of that passion we shall have to narrate in a future chapte For the present it is enough to indicate the presence of th youth among the circle of Goethe's acquaintances. They sa but little of each other, owing to the retiring sensitiveness Jerusalem; probably the same cause had kept them asund years before in Leipsic, where they were fellow-students; bu their acquaintance furnished Goethe with material which h was afterwards to use in his novel.

Jerusalem's unhappy passion and Goethe's unhappy passio one would think, must have been a bond of union betwee them; but in truth Goethe's passion can scarcely have bee called "unhappy"—it was rather a delicious uneasines Love, in the profound, absorbing sense, it was not. It wa an *imaginative passion*, in which the poet was more implicate than the man. Lotte excited his imagination; her beauty, h serene gaiety, her affectionate manners, charmed him; th romance of his position heightened the charm, by giving a *unconscious security* to his feelings. I am persuaded that Lotte had been free, he would have fled from her as he fle from Frederika. In saying this, however, I do not mean th the impossibility of obtaining her gave him any comfort. H was restless, impatient, and, in a certain sense, unhappy. H believed himself to be desperately in love with her, when truth he was only in love with the indulgence of the emotio she excited; a paradox which will be no mystery to tho acquainted with the poetic temperament.

Thus passed the summer. In August he made a lit

[1] I. Dass die Sprache dem ersten Menschen durch Wunder nicht mitgeth sein kann. II. Ueber die Natur und den Ursprung der allgemeinen u abstrakten Begriffe. III. Ueber die Freiheit. IV. Ueber die Mende sohnsche Theorie vom sinnlichen Vergnügen. V. Ueber die vermisch Empfindungen.

xcursion to Giessen, to see Professor Höpfner, one of the ctive writers in the *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeigen*. Charac-eristically he calls on the professor incognito, presenting him-elf as a shy awkward student; which, as Höpfner only knows im through correspondence, is facile enough. The comic cene ends by his jumping into the professor's arms, exclaiming, I am Goethe!" In Giessen, he found Merck. He per-uaded him to return to Wetzlar, to be introduced to Lotte. Ierck came; but so far from undervaluing her, as the very accurate account in the *Autobiography* would have us under-and, Merck wrote to a friend: "J'ai trouvé aussi l'amie de oethe, cette fille dont il parle avec tant d'enthousiasme dans outes ses lettres. Elle mérite réellement tout ce qu'il pourra ire du bien sur son compte."[1] He exasperated Goethe by referring the "Juno form" of one of her friends, and pointing er out as the more worthy of attention, because she was dis-ngaged. That Goethe should have been offended, was in the rder of things; but in the retrospective glance which he gave this period in his old age, he ought to have detected the ally friendly spirit animating Merck; he ought not to have ened him to Mephistopheles; the more so as Merck's re-resentations were really effectual, and hastened the dénoue-ent. Every day made Goethe's position less tenable. At st he consented to tear himself away, and accompany Merck a trip down the Rhine. It was time. Whatever factitious ement there may have been in his romance, the situation as full of danger; indulgence in such emotions would have eated at last a real and desperate passion; there was safety t in flight.

Merck left Wetzlar, having arranged that Goethe should in him at Coblentz. The following extracts from Kestner's *iary* will remind the reader of Goethe's departure from eipsic without saying adieu to Käthchen. His dislike of scenes" made him shrink from those emotions of leave-king usually so eagerly sought by lovers.

"*Sept.* 10*th*, 1772. To-day Dr. Goethe dined with me in e garden; I did not know that it was the last time. In the ening Dr. Goethe came to the *teutsche Haus*. He, Lottchen, d I, had a remarkable conversation about the future state; out going away and returning, &c., which was not begun by m, but by Lottchen. We agreed that the one who died first

[1] *Briefe aus dem Freundeskreise von Goethe, Herder, Merck*, p. 59.

should, if he could, give information to the living, about th conditions of the other life. Goethe was quite cast down, fo he knew that the next morning he was to go."

"*Sept. 11th, 1772.* This morning at seven o'clock Goeth set off without taking leave. He sent me a note with som books. He had long said that about this time he would mak a journey to Coblentz, where the pay-master of the force Merck, awaited him, and that he would say no good-bye but set off suddenly. So I had expected it. But that I wa notwithstanding, unprepared for it, I have felt—felt deep i my soul. In the morning I came home. 'Herr Dr. Goeth sent this at ten o'clock.' I saw the books and the note, an thought what this said to me—'He is gone!'—and was quit dejected. Soon after, Hans[1] came to ask me if he were reall gone? The *Geheime Räthin* Langen had sent to say by maid-servant: 'It was very ill-mannered of Dr. Goethe to se off in this way, without taking leave.' Lottchen sent wor in reply: 'Why had she not taught her nephew better?' Lottchen, in order to be certain, sent a box which she had o Goethe's, to his house. He was no longer there. In th middle of the day the *Geheime Räthin* Langen sent wor again: 'She would, however, let Dr. Goethe's mother kno how he had conducted himself.' Every one of the childre in the *teutsche Haus* was saying: '*Doctor Goethe is gone!*' I the middle of the day I talked with Herr von Born, who ha accompanied him, on horseback, as far as Brunnfells. Goeth had told him of our evening's conversation. Goethe had se out in very low spirits. In the afternoon I took Goethe note to Lottchen. She was sorry about his departure; th tears came into her eyes while reading. Yet it was a satisfac tion to her that he was gone, since she could not give him th affection he desired. We spoke only of him; indeed, I coul think of nothing else, and defended the manner of his leavin which was blamed by a silly person; I did it with muc warmth. Afterwards I wrote him word what had happene since his departure."

How graphically do these simple touches set the whol situation before us: the sorrow of the two lovers at the d parture of their friend, and the consternation of the childre on hearing that Dr. Goethe is gone! One needs such picture to reassure us that the episode, with all its strang romance, and with all its danger, was not really a fit of morbi

[1] One of Lotte's brothers.

ntimentalism. Indeed, had Goethe been the sentimental erther he has represented, he would never have had the rength of will to tear himself from such a position. He ould have blown his brains out, as Werther did. On the her hand, note what a worthy figure is this of Kestner, mpared with the cold Albert of the novel. A less generous ature would have rejoiced in the absence of a rival, and rgotten, in its joy, the loss of a friend. But Kestner, who new that his friend was his rival,—and such a rival, that oubts crossed him whether this magnificent youth were not ally more capable of rendering Lotte happy than he himself as,—grieved for the absence of his friend!

Here is Goethe's letter, referred to in the passage just noted from the Diary:

"He is gone, Kestner; when you get this note, he is gone! ive Lottchen the enclosed. I was quite composed, but your nversation has torn me to pieces. At this moment I can y nothing to you but farewell. If I had remained a moment nger with you I could not have restrained myself. Now I n alone, and to-morrow I go. O my poor head!"

This was the enclosure, addressed to Lotte:

"I certainly hope to come again, but God knows when! otte, what did my heart feel while you were talking, knowing, I did, that it was the last time I should see you? Not the st time, and yet to-morrow I go away. He is gone! What irit led you to that conversation? When I was expected to y all I felt, alas! what I cared about was here below, was ur hand, which I kissed for the last time. The room, which shall not enter again, and the dear father who saw me to the or for the last time. I am now alone, and may weep; I ave you happy, and shall remain in your heart. And shall e you again; *but not to-morrow is never!* Tell my boys, e is gone. I can say no more."

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATIONS FOR WERTHER

AVING sent his luggage to the house of Frau von Laroche, here he was to meet Merck, he made the journey down the hn, on foot. A delicious sadness subdued his thoughts as

he wandered dreamily along the river banks; and the lov scenes which met his eye solicited his pencil, awakening o more the ineffectual desire (which from time to time haun him) of becoming a painter. He had really no faculty in t direction, yet the desire often suppressed now rose up in su a serious shape, that he resolved to settle for ever whether should devote himself to the art or not. The test was curio The river glided beneath, now flashing in the sunlight, n partially concealed by willows. Taking a knife from pocket he flung it with his left hand into the river, hav previously resolved that if he saw it fall he was to become artist; but if the sinking knife were concealed by the willo he was to abandon the idea. No ancient oracle was e more ambiguous than the answer now given him. T willows concealed the sinking knife, but the water splash up like a fountain, and was distinctly visible. So indefin an answer left him in doubt.[1]

He wandered pleasantly on the banks till he reached Er and then journeyed down the river in a boat. The old Rh opened upon him; and he mentions with peculiar deli the magnificent situation of Oberlahnstein, and, above all, majesty of the castle of Ehrenbreitstein. On arriving at house of Geheimrath von La Roche, where he had be announced by Merck, he was most kindly received by t excellent family. His literary tendencies bound him to mother; his joyousness and strong sense, to the father; youth and poetry, to the daughters. The Frau von Laroc Wieland's earliest love, had written a novel in the Richards style, *Die Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim;* and Schä remarks that she probably gathered Merck, Goethe, and oth into her house with a view to favourable criticisms of t novel. If this were her design, she succeeded with Goet who reviewed her book in the *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeig* Whether this compliance was extorted by herself, or by charms of her daughter Maximiliane, history saith not; cert

[1] This mode of interrogating fate recalls that strange passage in ROUSSEA *Confessions* (Livre vi.), where he throws a stone at a tree: if he hits, it sign of salvation; if he misses, of damnation! Fortunately he hits: qui, véritablement, n'étais pas difficile, car j'avais eu le soin de le choisir gros et fort près; depuis lors je n'ai plus douté de mon salut." Had Go read this passage? The *Confessions* appeared in 1768, that is, four y before this journey down the Lahn. Yet from a passage in one of letters to the Frau von Stein, it seems as if he then, 1782, first read *Confessions*.

is that the dark eyes of the daughter made an impression
n the heart of the young reviewer. She is the Mlle. B.
troduced in *Werther;* but she is even still more interesting
us as the future mother of Bettina. They seem to have
oked into each other's eyes, flirted and sentimentalised, as
no Lotte had been left in Wetzlar. Nor will this surprise
ose who have considered the mobile nature of our poet.
e is miserable at moments, but the fulness of abounding life,
e strength of victorious will, and the sensibility to new im-
essions, keep his ever-active nature from the despondency
nich killed Werther. He is not always drooping because
harlotte is another's. He is open to every new impression,
rious or gay. Thus, among other indications, we find him
rowing off *Pater Brey* and *Satyros*, sarcasm and humour
nich are curious as products of the Werther period, although
no absolute worth; and we follow him up the Rhine, in
mpany with Merck and his family, leisurely enjoying Rhein-
s, St. Goar, Bacharach, Bingen, Elfeld, and Biberich,—

> "The blending of all beauties; streams and dells,
> Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
> And chiefless castles, breathing stern farewells
> From gray but leafy walls where Ruin greenly dwells"—

etching as if life were a leisure summer day.

He returned to Frankfurt, and busied himself with law,
erature, and painting. Wandering Italians, then rare, brought
sts of antique statues to Frankfurt; and with delighted eager-
ss he purchased a complete set, thus to revive as much as
ssible the grand impression he received at Mannheim.
nong his art-studies must be noted the attention bestowed
the Dutch painters. He began to copy some still-life
ctures; one of these he mentions with pride, and what,
nk you, this one was?—a copy of a tortoiseshell knife-handle
aid with silver! He has *Götz von Berlichingen* in his port-
io, and delights in copying a knife-handle!

To law he devoted himself with greater assiduity than ever.
s father, delighted at going through the papers with him, was
culiarly gratified at this honourable diligence, and in his
light was willing to overlook the other occupations of "this
gular creature," as he rightly named him. Goethe's literary
ns were numerous, and the *Frankfurt Journal* gave him
nstant opportunities for expressing himself on poetry, theo-
y, and even politics. Very significant is the following

passage from one of these articles, in reply to the compla that the Germans had no Fatherland, no Patriotism. "Wh we have a place in the world where we can repose with c property, a field to nourish us, and a house to cover us, ha we not there our Fatherland? and have not thousands up thousands in every city got this? and do they not live hap in their limited sphere? Wherefore, then, this vain strivi for a sentiment we neither have nor can have, a sentime which only in certain nations, and in certain periods, is t result of many concurrent circumstances? Roman patriotis God defend us from it, as from a giant! we could not find t stool upon which to sit, nor the bed on which to lie in su patriotism!" He was also rewriting *Götz von Berlichingen* He found, on re-reading the manuscript, that, besides t unities of time and place, he had sinned against the high unity of composition. He says,—

"In abandoning myself to my imagination, I had n deviated much in the beginning, and the first acts were pre much as had been intended. In the following acts, howev and especially towards the end, I was unconsciously led aw by a singular passion. In making Aldelheid so lovable, I h fallen in love with her myself,—my pen was unconsciou devoted to her alone,—the interest in her fate gained the p ponderance; and as, moreover, Götz, towards the end, h little to do, and afterwards only returns to an unhappy p ticipation in the Peasant War, nothing was more natural th that a charming woman should supplant him in the mind the author, who, casting off the fetters of art, thought to op a new field. I was soon sensible of this defect, or rather t culpable superfluity, since my poetical nature always impell me to unity. Instead of the biography of Götz and Germ antiquities, I now confined my attention to my own work, give it more and more historical and national substance, a to cancel that which was fabulous or passionate. In this indeed sacrificed much, as the inclination of the man had yield to the conviction of the artist. Thus, for instance, I h placed Aldelheid in a terrific nocturnal gipsy scene, where s produced a great effect by her beautiful presence. A nea examination banished her; and the love affair between Fra and his gracious lady, which was very circumstantially carr on in the fourth and fifth acts, was much condensed, and o the chief points indicated.

"Without altering the manuscript, which I still poss

its original shape, I determined to rewrite the whole, and d this with such activity, that in a few weeks I produced an tirely new version. It had never been my intention to have e second poem printed, as I looked upon this likewise as no ore than a preparatory exercise, the foundation of a new ork, to be accomplished with greater industry and deliberaon.

"When I suggested my plans to Merck, he laughed at me, d asked what was the meaning of this perpetual writing and writing? The work, he said, by this means, only becomes fferent, and seldom better; you must see what effect one ing produces, and then try something new. 'Be in time at e hedge, if you would dry your linen,' he exclaimed, in the ords of the proverb: hesitation and delay only make unrtain men. On the other hand, I pointed out how unleasant it would be to offer a bookseller a work on which I d bestowed so much affection, and perhaps have it refused; r how would they judge of so young, nameless, and audacious author? As my dread of the press gradually vanished, I shed to see printed my comedy *Die Mitschuldigen*, upon hich I set some value, but I found no publisher inclined to dertake it.

"Here the mercantile taste of my friend was at once excited. e proposed that we should publish at our own expense this ngular and striking work, from which we should derive large ofit. Like many others, he used often to reckon up the ookseller's profit, which with many works was certainly great, pecially if what was lost by other writings and commercial airs was left out of the calculation. We settled that I ould procure the paper, and that he should answer for the inting. To work we went, and I was pleased to see my ld dramatic sketch in clean proof sheets; it looked really tter than I myself expected. We completed the work, and was sent off in several parcels. It was not long before e attention it excited became universal. But as, with our nited means, the copies could not be forwarded, a pirated ition suddenly made its appearance. As, moreover, there uld be no immediate return, especially in ready money, for e copies sent out, and as my treasury was not very flourishg at the time when much attention and applause was bestowed on me, I was extremely perplexed how to pay for the paper means of which I had made the world acquainted with my ent. On the other hand, Merck, who knew better how to

help himself, was certain that all would soon come right agai but I never perceived that to be the case."

There is some inaccuracy in the foregoing, which a co parison of the first and second versions of the work will recti The changes he effected were very slight, and mainly cons in the striking out of the two scenes in which Adelheid pla so conspicuous a part.

A greater inaccuracy, amounting to injustice, is contain in the passage about Herder, as we now learn from the *P thumous Papers* of the latter, from which it is clear that *did* greatly admire *Götz*, and wrote warmly of it to his betrothe saying, "you will have some heavenly hours of delight wh you read it, for there is in it uncommon German streng depth, and truth, although here and there it is rather schem than artistically wrought (*nur gedacht*)." Probably in writi to Goethe he was more critical, and, as usual with him, som what pedagogic; but it is also probable that he was loud praise, since the poet replies, "Your letter was a consolatic I already rank the work much lower than you do. Yo sentence that Shakspeare has quite spoiled me, I admit the full. The work must be fused anew, freed from its dro and with newer, better metal cast again. Then it shall appe before you." He seems to have been nettled (not unnatural at the sentence, "all is rather schemed than artistica wrought," which, he says, is true of *Emilia Galotti*, a prevents his altogether liking it, although a masterpie Judging from a tolerably extensive acquaintance with autho in relation to criticism, I should think it highly probable t the longer Goethe pondered on Herder's letter the fain became his pleasure in the praise, and the stronger his irri tion at the blame. I have known a feeling of positi gratitude for a criticism, slowly change into an uneasy a almost indignant impression of injustice having been do That Goethe did not, on reflection, so entirely concur w the objections he was at first ready to admit, appears from t fact that he did not recast his work.

When *Götz* appeared the effect on the public was inst taneous, startling. Its bold expression of the spirit of Freedo its defiance of French criticism, and the originality no less th the power of the writing, carried it triumphant over Germa It was pronounced a masterpiece in all the *salons* and in the beer-houses of that uneasy time. Imitations follow

th amazing rapidity; the stage was noisy with the clang of ivalry, and the book shelves creaked beneath the weight of suscitated Feudal Times.

An amusing example of "the trade" is mentioned by Goethe. bookseller paid him a visit, and with the air of a man well-tisfied with his proposal, offered to give an *order* for a dozen ays in the style of *Götz*, for which a handsome *honorarium* ould be paid. His offer was the more generous, because ch was the state of literature at this period, that, in spite of e success *Götz* achieved, it brought no money to its author pirated editions circulating everywhere, and robbing him of s reward. Moreover, what the bookseller proposed was at the public expected. When once a writer has achieved ccess in any direction, he must continue in that direction, peril his reputation. An opinion has been formed of him; has been *classed;* and the public will not have its classi-ation disturbed. Nevertheless, if he repeat himself, this reasoning public declaims against his "poverty." No man er repeated himself less than Goethe. He did not model statue, and then amuse himself with taking casts of it in fferent materials. He lived, thought, and suffered; and cause he had lived, thought, and suffered, he wrote. When had once expressed his experience in a work, he never curred to it. The true artist, like the snake, casts his skin, t never resumes it. He works according to the impulse m within, not according to the demand from without. And oethe was a genuine artist, never exhausting a lucky dis-very, never working an impoverished vein. Every poem ne fresh from life, coined from the mint of his experience. *Götz* is the greatest product of the *Sturm und Drang* move-nt. As we before hinted, this period is not simply one vague wild hopes and retrospections of old German life, s also one of unhealthy sentimentalism. Goethe, the great presentative poet of his day—the secretary of his age—gives masterpieces which characterise both these tendencies. side the insurgent Götz, stands the dreamy Werther. And , accurately as these two works represent two active dencies of that time, they are both far removed above perishing extravagances of that time; they are both *ideal* pressions of the age, and as free from the disease which rupted it, as Goethe himself was free from the weakness his contemporaries. Wilkes used to say that he had never n a Wilkite. Goethe was never a Werther. To appreciate

the distance which separated him and his works from h sentimental contemporaries and their works, we must stu the characters of such men as Jacobi, Klinger, Wagner, a Lenz, or we must read such works as *Woldemar*. It will th be plain why Goethe turned with aversion from such work his own included, when a few years had cleared his insig and settled his aims. Then also will be seen the differen between genius which idealises the spirit of the age, and tale which panders to it.[1]

It was, indeed, a strange epoch; the unrest was the unre of disease, and its extravagances were morbid symptoms. the letters, memoirs, and novels, which still remain to testi to the follies of the age, may be read a self-questioning a sentimental introspection, enough to create in healthy min a distaste both for sentiment and self-questioning. A factitio air is carried even by the most respectable sentiments; a many *not* respectable array themselves in rose-pink. Natu is seldom spoken of but in hysterical enthusiasm. Tears a caresses are prodigally scattered, and upon the slighte provocations. In Coburg an *Order of Mercy and Expiati* is instituted by sensitive noodles. Leuchsenring, whc Goethe satirised in *Pater Brey* as a professional sen mentalist, gets up a secret society, and calls it the *Order Sentiment*, to which tender souls think it a privilege to belon Friendship is fantastically deified; brotherly love dra trembling souls together, not on the solid grounds of affecti and mutual service, but on entirely imaginary grounds "spiritual communion"; whence arose, as Jean Paul witt says, "an universal love for all men and beasts—exce reviewers." It was a sceptical epoch, in which everythi established came into question. Marriage, of course, ca badly off among a set of men who made the first comman ment of genius to consist in loving your neighbour *and* yc neighbour's wife.

These were symptoms of disease; the social organisati was out of order; a crisis, evidently imminent, was herald by extravagances in literature, as elsewhere. The cause of t disease was want of faith. In religion, in philosophy, politics, in morals, this eighteenth century was ostentatic of its disquiet and disbelief. The old faith, which for so lo had made European life an organic unity, and which in

1 As Karl Grün epigrammatically says of Goethe and his contemporar "he was at once patient and physician, they were patients and nothing els

tering weakness had received a mortal blow from Luther, s no longer universal, living, active, dominant; its place of iversal directing power was vacant; a new faith had not sen. The French Revolution was another crisis of that ganic disturbance which had previously shown itself in other order of ideas,—in the Reformation. Beside this ful crisis, other minor crises are noticeable. Everywhere e same Protestant spirit breaks through traditions in morals, literature, and in education. Whatever is established, atever rests on tradition, is questioned. The classics are longer believed in; men begin to maintain the doctrine of gress, and proclaim the superiority of the moderns. Art pronounced to be in its nature progressive. Education is longer permitted to pursue its broad traditional path; the thods which were excellent for the past, no longer suffice the present; everywhere new methods rise up to ameliorate old. The divine right of institutions ceases to gain dence. The individual claimed and proclaimed his free- m: freedom of thought and freedom of act. Freedom is watchword of the eighteenth century.

Enough has been said to indicate the temper of those times, l to show why *Werther* was the expression of that temper. rning to the novel itself, we find it so bound up with the of its author, that the history of his life at this epoch is record of the materials from which it was created; we st, therefore, retrace our steps again to the point where ethe left Wetzlar, and, by the aid of his letters to Kestner, ow the development of this strange romance.

Götz was published in the summer of 1773. It was in the umn of 1772 that Goethe left Wetzlar, and returned home. letters to Kestner and Charlotte are full of passionate wals and tender reminiscences. The capricious ortho- phy and grammar to be noticed in them, belong to a od when it was thought unworthy of a genius to conform letails so fastidious as correct spelling and good grammar; the affectionate nature which warms these letters, the ndant love the writer felt and inspired, these belong to , and not to his age. If a proof were wanted of Goethe's ng disposition, we might refer to these letters, especially se addressed to the young brother of Charlotte. The ler of this biography, however, will need no such proof, we may therefore confine ourselves to the relation of the to the Kestners. "God bless you, dear Kestner,"

runs one of the early letters, "and tell Lotte that I o believe I can forget her; but then I have a relapse, an is worse with me than ever." He longs once more to sitting at her feet, letting the children clamber over him. writes in a strain of melancholy, which is as much poetr sorrow: when a thought of suicide arises, it is only one am the many thoughts which hurry through his mind. The a very significant passage in the *Autobiography*, which a describes his real state of mind: "I had a large collectio weapons, and among them a very handsome dagger. Th placed by my bedside every night, and before extinguish my candle I made various attempts to pierce the sharp p a couple of inches into my breast; but not being able to it I laughed myself out of the notion, threw aside all hy chondriacal fancies, and resolved to live." He played suicidal thoughts, because he was restless, and suicide wa fashionable speculation of the day; but whoever supp these thoughts of suicide were serious, has greatly misun stood him. He had them not, even at this period; and w he wrote *Werther* he had long thrown off even the f temptation of poetic longings for death. In October the report reaches him that his Wetzlar friend, Goué, has himself: "Write to me at once about Goué," he says Kestner; "*I honour such an act, and pity mankind*, and all the Philisters make their tobacco-smoke comments o and say: There, you see! Nevertheless, I hope neve make my friends unhappy by such an act, myself." He too full of life to do more than coquette with the idea death. Here is a confession: "I went to Homburg, there gained new love of life, seeing how much pleasure appearance of a miserable thing like me can give such excel people." On the 7th of November he suddenly appeare Wetzlar with Schlosser, and stayed there till the 10th, feverish, but delicious, enthusiasm. He writes to Kestne reaching home: "It was assuredly high time for me to Yesterday evening I had thoroughly criminal thoughts a the sofa. . . . And when I think how above all my h your greeting of me was, I am very calm. I confess I c with some anxiety. I came with a pure, warm, full heart, Kestner, and it is a hell-pain when one is not received in same spirit as one brings. But so—God give you a w life such as those two days were to me!"

The report of Goué's suicide, before alluded to, turned

be false; but the suicide of Jerusalem was a melancholy
Goethe immediately writes to Kestner:
"Unhappy Jerusalem! The news was shocking, and unected; it was horrible to have this news as an accompaniment to the pleasantest gift of love. The unfortunate man! the devil, that is, the infamous men who enjoy nothing the chaff of vanity, and have the lust of idolatry in their rts, and preach idolatry, and cramp healthy nature, and rstrain and ruin the faculties, are guilty of this misery, of misery. If the cursed parson is not guilty, God forgive that I wish he may break his neck like Eli. The poor ng man! When I came back from a walk, and he met in the moonlight, I said to myself, he is in love. Lotte st still remember that I laughed about it. God knows, eliness undermined his heart, and for seven years[1] his n has been familiar to me. I have talked little with him. en I came away, I brought with me a book of his; I will p that and the remembrance of him as long as I live."
mong the many inaccuracies of the *Autobiography*, there ne of consequence on the subject of *Werther*, namely, the rtion that it was the news of Jerusalem's suicide which denly set him to work. The news reached him in October 2, and in November Kestner sent him the narrative of usalem's last days. Not until the middle and end of 1773 he write *Werther*. In fact, the state of his mind at this od is by no means such as the *Autobiography* describes. d this letter written in December: "That is wonderful! as about to ask if Lenchen[2] had arrived, and you write to me she is. If I were only there I would nullify your disrse, and astonish all the tailors; I think I should be fonder ner than of Lotte. From the portrait she must be an able girl, much better than Lotte, if not precisely the . . . *I am free and thirsting for love.* I must try and come; that would not help me. Here am I once more in Frank- and carry plans and fancies about with me, which I should do if I had but a maiden." In January he seems to have d a maiden, for he writes: "Tell Lotte there is a certain den here whom I love heartily, and whom I would choose re all others if I had any thought of marriage, and she also born on the 11th January.[3] It would be pretty: such a ! Who knows what God's will is?" I agree with Viehoff

[1] This "seven years" refers to the first sight of Jerusalem at Leipsic.
[2] A sister of Charlotte's.
[3] Lotte's birthday.

against Düntzer, that this alludes to Anna Antoinette Geroc a relation of Schlosser's, who is known to have loved h passionately, and to have furnished some traits for Mignc Clear it is that he is not very melancholy. "Yesterday skated from sunrise to sunset. And I have other sources joy which I can't relate. Be comforted that I am almost happy as people who love, like you two, that I am as full hope, and that I have lately *felt* some poems. My sis greets you, my maiden also greets you, my gods greet yo Thus we see, that, although Lotte's picture hangs by his be side, although her image hovers constantly before him, a the *Teutsche Haus* is the centre of many yearning thoughts, is not pining despondently for Charlotte. He has rewritt *Götz*, and allowed Merck to carry it to the printer's. He living in a very merry circle, one figure in which is Antoine Gerock, as we gather from a letter written in February 17 a month after that in which he refers to his "maiden." He is the passage: "At Easter I will send you a quite adve turous novelty.[1] My maiden greets Lotte. In character s has much of Lenchen, and my sister says resembles her p trait. If we were but as much in love as you two—meanwh I will call her my 'dear little wife,' for recently she fell to in a lottery as my wife." She was then only fifteen, and th relation to each other will be described in chap. vi.

And now the day approaches when Lotte is to be marri and leave Wetzlar. He writes to her brother Hans, beggi him, when Lotte departs, to write at least once a week, t the connection with the *Teutsche Haus* may not be brok although its jewel is carried away. He writes to Kestner be allowed to get the wedding ring. "I am wholly yours, from henceforth care not to see you nor Lotte. Her portr too shall away from my bedroom the day of her marria and shall not be restored till I hear she is a mother; and fr that moment a new epoch begins, in which I shall not l her but her children, a little indeed on her account, but th nothing to do with it; and if you ask me to be godfather, spirit shall rest upon the boy, and he shall make a fool himself for a maiden like his mother." Enclosed was t note to Lotte: "May my memory with this ring for e remain with you in your happiness. Dear Lotte, some ti hence we shall see each other again, you with this ring on y

[1] *Götz.*

ger, and I as always thine. I know no name or bye-name sign this with. You know me." When the marriage takes ace he writes to Kestner: "God bless you; you have surised me. I had meant to make a holy sepulchre on Good iday, and bury Lotte's portrait. But it hangs still by my d, and shall remain there till I die. Be happy. Greet for e your angel, and Lenchen; she shall be the second Lotte, d it shall be as well with her. I wander in the desert where water is, my hair is my shade, and my blood my spring." ne bridesmaid brings him the bridal bouquet, a flower of nich he sticks in his hat, as he walks to Darmstadt, in a elancholy mood; but to show that his passion for Charlotte s after all only a poetic passion, here is a passage in the ter he sent to Kestner immediately after the marriage: "O estner, when have I envied you Lotte in the human sense? not to envy you her in the spiritual sense I must be an gel without lungs and liver. Nevertheless I must disclose ecret to you. That you may know and behold. When I ached myself to Lotte, and you know that I was attached her from my heart, Born talked to me about it, *as people are nt to talk*. 'If I were K. I should not like it. How can end? You quite cut him out!' and the like. Then I said him in these very words, in his room, it was in the morn-g: 'The fact is, I am fool enough to think the girl some-ng remarkable; if she deceived me, and turned out to be girls usually are, and used K. as capital in order to make most of her charms, the first moment which discovered t to me, the first moment which brought her nearer to me, uld be the last of our acquaintance,' and this I protested d swore. And between ourselves, without boasting, I derstand the maiden somewhat, and you know how I have for her and for everything she has seen and touched, and erever she has been, and shall continue to feel to the end the world. And now see how far I am envious, and must so. For either I am a fool, which it is difficult to believe, she is the subtlest deceiver, or then—Lotte, the very Lotte whom we are speaking." A few days afterwards he writes: My poor existence is petrified to barren rock. This summer ose all. Merck goes. My sister too. And I am alone."

The marriage of Cornelia, his much-loved sister, was to him very serious matter, and her loss was not easily supplied. came, too, at a time when other losses pained him. Lotte s married, Merck was away, and a dear friend had just died.

Nevertheless, he seems to have been active in plans. Amo them was most probably that of a drama on *Mahomet*, wh he erroneously places at a later period, after the journ with Lavater and Basedow, but which Schäfer, very prope restores to the year 1773, as Boie's *Annual* for 1774 conta the *Mahomet's Song*. Goethe has narrated in full the conc tion of this piece, which is very grand; he tells us the id arose within him of illustrating the sad fact, noticeable in biographies of genius, that every man who attempts to real a great idea comes in contact with the lower world, and m place himself on its level in order to influence it, and th compromises his higher aims, and finally forfeits them. chose Mahomet as the illustration, never having regarded h as an impostor. He had carefully studied the Koran a Mahomet's life, in preparation. "The piece," he sa "opened with a hymn sung by Mahomet alone under open sky. He first adores the innumerable stars as so ma gods; but as the star god (Jupiter) rises, he offers to him, the king of the stars, exclusive adoration. Soon after, moon ascends the horizon, and claims the eye and heart of worshipper, who, refreshed and strengthened by the dawni sun, is afterwards stimulated to new praises. But th changes, however delightful, are still unsatisfactory, and mind feels that it must rise still higher, and mounts theref to God, the One Eternal, Infinite, to whom all these splen but finite creatures owe their existence. I composed t hymn with great delight; it is now lost, but might easily restored as a cantata, and is adapted for music by the vari of its expression. It would, however, be necessary to imag it sung according to the original plan, by the leader o caravan with his family and tribe; and thus the alternation the voices and the strength of the chorus would be secured.

"Mahomet converted, imparts these feelings and sentime to his friends; his wife and Ali become unconditional ciples. In the second act, he attempts to propagate this fa in the tribe; Ali still more zealously. Assent and opposit display themselves according to the variety of character. contest begins, the strife becomes violent, and Mahomet fl In the third act, he defeats his enemies, makes his religion public one, and purifies the Kaaba from idols; but this be impracticable by force, he is obliged to resort to cunni *What in his character is earthly increases and develops itse the divine retires and is obscured.* In the fourth act, Mahor

rsues his conquests, his doctrine becomes a *means* rather an an *end*, all kinds of practices are employed, nor are rrors wanting. A woman, whose husband has been con-mned by Mahomet, poisons him. In the fifth act he feels at he is poisoned. His great calmness, the return to himself d to his better nature, make him worthy of admiration. He rifies his doctrine, establishes his kingdom, and dies.

" This sketch long occupied my mind; for, according to custom, I was obliged to let the conception perfect itself fore I commenced the execution. All that genius, through aracter and intellect, can exercise over mankind, was therein be represented, and what it gains and loses in the process. veral of the songs to be introduced in the drama, were idly composed; the only one remaining of them, however, the *Mahomet's Gesang*. This was to be sung by Ali, in nour of his master, at the apex of his success, just before change resulting from the poison." Of all his unrealised emes, this causes me the greatest regret. In grandeur, oth, and in the opportunities for subtle psychological un-elment of the mysteries of our nature, it was a scheme uliarly suited to his genius. How many *Clavigos* and *llas* would one not have given for such a poem?

Maximiliane Laroche had recently married Brentano, a nkfurt merchant, a widower, many years her senior, with children. Goethe became intimate at their house; and, Merck writes, " il joue avec les enfans et accompagne le vecin de madame avec la basse. M. Brentano, quoique ez jaloux pour un Italien, l'aime et veut absolument qu'il quente la maison." The husband wanted his presence, n as an umpire in the disputes with his wife; and the wife, , chose him umpire in her disputes with her husband; nay, rck hints, " il a la petite Madame Brentano à consoler sur leur de l'huile, du fromage, et des manières de son mari." passed autumn and winter, in a tender relation, such as in se days was thought blameless enough, but such as modern ers cannot believe to have been so blameless. For my I cannot disbelieve his own word on this matter, when says: " My former relation to the young wife, which was, perly speaking, only that of a brother to a sister, was re-ed after marriage. Being of her own age, I was the only in whom she heard an echo of those voices to which she been accustomed in her youth. We lived in childish fidence; and, *although there was nothing passionate in our*

intercourse, it was painful, because she was unable to reconc herself to her new condition." If not passionate, the relati was certainly sentimental and dangerous. Hear how he wri to Frau Jacobi: "It goes well with me, dear lady, and than for your double, triple letter. The last three weeks there h been nothing but excitement, and now we are as content and happy as possible. I say *we*, for since the 15th of Janu not a branch of my existence has been solitary. And Fa which I have so often vituperated, is now courteously entitl beautiful, wise Fate, for since my sister left me, this is the fi gift that can be called an equivalent. The Max is still t same angel whose simple and darling qualities draw all hea towards her, and the feeling I have for her—wherein h husband would find cause for jealousy—now makes the joy my existence. Brentano is a worthy fellow, with a frai strong character, and not without sense. The children a lively and good." An anecdote, related by his mother Bettina, gives us an amusing picture of him parading bef Max. The morning was bright and frosty. "Wolfgang bu into the room where his mother was seated with some frien 'Mother, you have never seen me skate, and the weather is beautiful to-day.' I put on my crimson fur cloak, which h a long train, and was closed in front by golden clasps, and drove out. There skated my son, like an arrow among groups. The wind had reddened his cheeks, and blown powder out of his brown hair. When he saw my crims cloak he came towards our carriage and smiled coaxingly me. 'Well,' said I, 'what do you want?' 'Come, moth you can't be cold in the carriage, give me your cloak.' 'Y won't put it on, will you?' 'Certainly.' I took it off, he it on, threw the train over his arm, and away he went over ice like a son of the gods. Oh, Bettina, if you could h seen him! Anything so beautiful is not to be seen now! clapped my hands for joy. Never shall I forget him, as darted out from under one arch of the bridge and in ag under the other, the wind carrying the train behind him as flew! Your mother, Bettina, was on the ice, and all this to please her."

No thought of suicide in *that* breast!

Quite in keeping with this anecdote is the spirit of satirical farce *Götter, Helden, und Wieland*, which is alluded in this passage of a letter to Kestner, May 1774, and m therefore have been written some time before: "My ro

joke against Wieland makes more noise than I thought. He behaves very well in the matter, as I hear, so that I am in the wrong." The origin of this farce was a strong feeling in the circle of Goethe's friends, that Wieland had modernised, misrepresented, and traduced the Grecian gods and heroes. One Sunday afternoon "the rage for dramatising everything" seized him, and with a bottle of Burgundy by his side he wrote off the piece just as it stands. The friends were in raptures with it. He sent it to Lenz, then at Strasburg, who insisted on its at once being printed. After some demurring, consent was given, and at Strasburg the work saw the light. In reading it, the public, unacquainted with the circumstances and the mood to which it owed its origin, unacquainted also with the fact of its never having been designed for publication, felt somewhat scandalised at its fierceness of sarcasm. But in truth there was no malice in it. Flushed with the insolence and pride of wit, he attacked a poet whom, on the whole, he greatly loved; and Wieland took no offence at it, but reviewed it in the *Teutsche Mercur*, recommending it to all lovers of pasquinade, *persiflage*, and sarcastic wit. This reminds one of Socrates standing up in the theatre, when he was lampooned by Aristophanes, that the spectators might behold the original of the sophist they were hooting on the stage. *Götter, Helden, und Wieland* is really amusing, and under the mask of its buffoonery contains some sound and acute criticism.[1] The peculiarity of it, however, consists in its attacking Wieland for treating heroes unheroically, at a time when, from various parts of Germany, loud voices were raised against Wieland, as an immoral, an unchristian, nay, even an atheistical writer. Lavater called upon Christians to pray for this sinner; theologians forbade their followers to read his works; pulpits were loud against him. In 1773 the whole Klopstock school rose against him[2] in moral indignation, and burned his works on Klopstock's birthday. Very different was Goethe's ire. He saw that the gods and heroes were represented in perruques and satin breeches, that their cheeks were rouged, their thews and sinews shrunk to those of a *petit-maître;* and against such a conception of the old Pagan life he raised his voice.

"I cannot blame you," he writes to Kestner, "for living in the world and making acquaintances amongst men of rank

[1] It called forth a retort, *Thiere, Menschen, und Goethe;* which has not fallen in my way. Critics speak of it as personal, but worthless.

[2] *Gervinus*, iv. p. 285.

and influence. Intercourse with the great is always advantageous to him who knows properly how to use it. I honour gunpowder, if only for its power of bringing me a bird down out of the air. . . . So in God's name continue, and don't trouble yourself about the opinions of others, shut your heart to antagonists as to flatterers. . . . O Kestner, I am in excellent spirits, and if I have not you by my side, yet all the dear ones are ever before me. The circle of noble natures is the highest happiness I have yet achieved. And now, my dear *Götz*, I trust in his strong nature, he will endure. He is a human offspring with many sins, and nevertheless one of the best. Many will object to his clothing and rough angles; yet I have so much applause that it astonishes me. I don't think I shall soon write anything which will again find its public. Meanwhile I work on, in the hope that something striking in the whirl of things may be laid hold of."

On Christmas Day 1773, in answer to Kestner's wish that he should come to Hanover and play a part there, he writes this noticeable sentence: "My father would not object to my entering foreign service, and no hope or desire of an office detains me here—but, dear Kestner, *the talents and powers which I have, I need too much for my own aims; I am accustomed to act according to my instinct, and therewith can no prince be served.*" In less than two years he was to accept service under a prince; but we shall see that he did so with full consciousness of what was required, and of what he could afford to give.

The mention of that prince leads me to make an important correction in the date of the first acquaintance with him, erroneously placed in the December of 1774 by Goethe. It is useless to inquire how Goethe's memory could so have deceived him as to bring this important event in conjunction with his first acquaintance with Lili; the dates of the Knebel correspondence are beyond question. On the 11th February Knebel paid him a visit, and informed him that the two princes, Karl August and Constantine, were desirous of seeing him. He went, and was received with flattering kindness, especially by Karl August, who had just read *Götz*. He dined with his royal hosts in a quiet way, and left them, having received and produced an agreeable impression. They were going to Mainz, whither he promised to follow them. His father, like a sturdy old burgher who held aloof from princes, shook his sceptical head at the idea of this visit. To

Mainz, however, the poet went a day or two afterwards, and spent several days with the young princes, as their guest. This was his first contact with men of high rank.

In the following May he hears with joy that Lotte is a mother, and that her boy is to be called Wolfgang, after him; and on the 16th of June he writes to Lotte: "I will soon send you a friend who has much resemblance to me, and hope you will receive him well; he is named Werther, and is and was—but that he must himself explain."

Whoever has followed the history thus far, moving on the secure ground of contemporary document, will see how vague and inaccurate is the account of the composition of *Werther* given by its author, in his retrospective narrative. It was not originated by growing despair at the loss of Charlotte. It was not originated by tormenting thoughts of self-destruction. It was not to free himself from suicide that he wrote this story of suicide. All these several threads were woven into its woof; but the rigour of dates forces us to the conviction that *Werther*, although taken from his experience, was not written while that experience was being undergone. Indeed, the true philosophy of art would, *a priori*, lead us to the conviction that, although he cleared his "bosom of the perilous stuff" by moulding this perilous stuff into a work of art, he must have essentially outlived the storm before he painted it,—conquered his passion, and subdued the rebellious thoughts, before he made them plastic to his purpose. The poet cannot see to write when his eyes are full of tears; cannot sing when his breast is swollen with sighs, and sobs choke utterance. He must rise superior to his grief before he can sublimate his grief in song. The artist is a master, not a slave; he *wields* his passion, he is not hurried along by it; he possesses, and is not possessed. Art enshrines the great sadness of the world, but is itself not sad. The storm of passion weeps itself away, and the heavy clouds roll off in quiet masses, to make room for the sun, which, in shining through, touches them to beauty with its rays. While pain is in its newness, it is pain, and nothing else; it is not Art, but Feeling. Goethe could not write *Werther* before he had outlived Wertherism. It may have been, as he says, a "general confession," and a confession which brought him certain relief; but we do not confess until we have repented, and we do not repent until we have outlived the error.

Werther was written rapidly. "I completely isolated myself," he says; "nay, prohibited the visits of my friends,

and put aside everything that did not immediately belong to the subject. Under such circumstances, and under so many preparations in secret, I wrote it in four weeks, without any scheme of the whole, or treatment of any part being previously put on paper." It is of this seclusion Merck writes: "Le grand succès que son drame a eu lui tourne un peu la tête. Il se détache de tous ses amis, et n'existe que dans les compositions qu'il prépare pour le public."

It is a matter of some interest to ascertain the exact truth respecting the date of the composition of Werther. As before stated, his own account is manifestly inaccurate; and the only thing which renders it difficult to assign the dates with tolerable precision, is his statement that it was written in four weeks, without any scheme of the whole or treatment of any part having been previously put on paper. If we consent to believe that his memory in this case deceived him, the correspondence of the period furnishes hints from which we may conclude that in 1772, on the arrival of the news about Jerusalem's suicide, he made a general sketch, either in his mind or on paper; and that during the following year he worked at it from time to time. In June 1773, he writes to Kestner: "And thus I dream and ramble through life, writing plays and *novels*, and the like." In July he writes: "I am working my own situation into art for the consolation of gods and men. I know what Lotte will say when she sees it, and I know what I shall answer her." The word in the original is *Schauspiel*—play, drama; Viehoff suggests that he does not mean drama, but a work which will bring his situation *zur Schau*—before the public eye. In September of the same year, he writes: "You are always by me when I write. At present, I am working at a novel, but it gets on slowly." In November Frau Jacobi writes to him, acknowledging the receipt of a novel, in manuscript, no doubt, which delights her. In February 1774, Merck writes of him: "Je prévois qu'un roman, qui paraîtra de lui à pâques, sera aussi bien reçu que son drame." As we have nowhere a hint of any other novel, besides Werther, at this epoch, it is difficult to resist the evidence of these dates; and we must, therefore, conclude that the assertion in the *Autobiography* is wholly inexact.

In September 1774 he wrote to Lotte, sending her a copy of *Werther:* "Lotte, how dear this little book is to me thou wilt feel in reading it, and this copy is as dear to me as if it were the only one in the world. Thou must have it, Lotte; I have

kissed it a hundred times; have kept it locked up that no one might touch it. O, Lotte! And I beg thee let no one except Meyers see it yet; it will be published at the Leipsic fair. I wish each to read it alone,—thou alone,—Kestner alone,—and each to write me a little word about it. Lotte, adieu Lotte!"

Let us now take a glance at this work, which startled Europe, and which for a long while was all that Europe knew of Goethe.[1]

CHAPTER V

WERTHER

Aujourdhui l'homme désire immensément, mais il veut faiblement: In these words Guizot has written an epigraph for *Werther;* a book composed out of a double history, the history of its author's experience, and the history of one of his friends.

The story of Jerusalem, whom he met in the Wetzlar circle, furnished Goethe with the machinery by which to introduce his own experience. He took many of the details from Kestner's long letter, sent shortly after the catastrophe: the letter may therefore be here abridged, as an introduction to the novel. Jerusalem, melancholy by temperament, was unhappy during the whole of his Wetzlar residence. He had been denied admittance into the high diplomatic society to which his position gave him claims; he had been in unpleasant relations with his ambassador, whose secretary he was; and he had fallen in love with the wife of his friend. Thus oppressed, he shunned company, was fond of long moonlight walks, and once lost himself in the wood, wandering about the whole night. But he was solitary, even in his grief, told none of his friends the causes of his melancholy, and solaced himself with novels—the wretched novels of that day. To these he added all the tragedies he could get hold of; English writers, especially the gloomy writers; and various philosophical works. He wrote also essays, one on suicide, a subject which greatly occupied him. Mendelssohn's *Phædon* was his favourite work.[2] When the rumour reached

[1] SCOTT, in prefacing his translation of *Götz*, says: "It was written by the *elegant* author of the *Sorrows of Werther*."

[2] Goethe, it will be remembered, in Strasburg, made an analysis of this work, contrasting it with Plato's.

Wetzlar of Goué's suicide he said that Goué was not a fit man for such a deed, but defended the act. A few days before his own unhappy end he was talking with Schleimitz about suicide, and said, "It would be a bad look out, however, if the shot were not to take effect!" The rest of the narrative must be told in Kestner's own words, the simple circumstantial style best fitting such a history.

"Last Tuesday he comes with a discontented look to Kielmansegge, who was ill. The latter asks how he is? 'Better than I like to be.' He also that day talked a good deal about love, which he had never done before; and then about the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which had for some time pleased him more than usual. In the afternoon (Tuesday) he goes to Secretary H.'s. Until eight o'clock in the evening they play tarock together. Annchen Brandt was also there; Jerusalem accompanied her home. As they walk, Jerusalem often strikes his forehead, gloomily and repeatedly says: 'If one were but dead—if one were but in heaven!' Annchen joked him about it; he bargains for a place by her side in heaven, and at parting he says: 'It is agreed, then, that I shall have a place by you in heaven.'

"On Wednesday, as there were great doings at the Crown Prince, and everybody invited everybody, he went there to dinner, though he generally dined at home, and he brought Secretary H. with him. He did not behave there otherwise than usual; if anything, he was more cheerful. After dinner, Secretary H. takes him home with him to see his wife. They take coffee; Jerusalem says to Mrs. H.: 'Dear Mrs. H., this is the last coffee I shall drink with you.' She thinks it a joke, and answers in that tone. The same afternoon (Wednesday) Jerusalem was alone at H.'s: what took place there is unknown; perhaps herein lies the cause of what followed. In the evening, just as it was dark, Jerusalem comes to Garbenheim, into the usual inn, asks whether anyone is in the room above? On the answer, No, he goes up, soon comes down again, goes out into the yard, towards the left, comes back after a little while, goes into the garden; it becomes quite dark, he remains there a long time, the hostess makes her remarks upon this, he comes out of the garden, goes past her with hasty steps, all without saying a word, into the yard, hurrying straight away from it.

"In the meantime, or still later, something passed between H. and his wife, concerning which H. confides to a female

friend that they quarrelled a little about Jerusalem; and his wife at last desired that he would forbid him the house, whereupon he did so the following day, in a note.

"[It is said[1] that Secretary H. has given secret information that on the Wednesday before Jerusalem's death, when he was with H. and his wife taking coffee, the husband was obliged to go to the ambassador. When he returns, he observes an extraordinary seriousness in his wife, and a silence in Jerusalem, which appear strange to him, especially as he finds them so much changed after his return. Jerusalem goes away. Secretary H. makes his observations on the above-mentioned circumstances: he contracts suspicion that something injurious to him may have happened in his absence; for he is very suspicious and jealous. Nevertheless, he puts on a composed and cheerful air, and determines to put his wife to the test. He says: Jerusalem has often invited him to dinner; what does she think of their asking Jerusalem for once to dine with them? She, the wife, answers: No; and she must entirely break off intercourse with Jerusalem; he begins to behave in such a way that she must altogether avoid his society. And she held herself bound to tell him, her husband, what had passed in his absence. Jerusalem had thrown himself at her feet, and had wanted to make a formal declaration of love to her. She was naturally indignant at this, and had uttered many reproaches to him, &c. She now desired that her husband would forbid him, Jerusalem, the house, for she could and would neither see nor hear anything more of him.

"Hereupon, it is said, H. the next morning wrote the note to Jerusalem, &c.]

"In the night of Wednesday-Thursday he got up at two o'clock, awakened the servant, said he could not sleep, he was not well, has a fire lighted, tea made, yet is afterwards, to all appearance, very well.

"Thursday morning, Secretary H. sends Jerusalem a note. The maid will not wait for an answer, and goes away. Jerusalem has just been shaved. At eleven o'clock Jerusalem sends a note to Secretary H., who does not take it from the servant, and says he requires no answer, he cannot enter into any correspondence, and besides they saw each other every day at the office. When the servant brings back the note unopened, Jerusalem throws it on the table and says: Very

[1] The passage in brackets occurs in a subsequent letter; it is inserted here to give the story continuity.

good. (Perhaps to make the servant believe that it related to some indifferent matter.)

"In the middle of the day he dines at home, but takes little —some soup. At one o'clock he sends a note to me, and at the same time one to his ambassador, in which he begs the latter to send him his money for this (or the following) month. The servant comes to me. I am not at home, nor is my servant. Jerusalem in the meantime is gone out, comes home about a quarter-past three, the servant gives him the note again. Jerusalem asks him why he did not leave it at my house with some maid-servant? He replies, because it was open and unsealed. Jerusalem: That was of no consequence, every one might read it; he must take it again. The servant thinks himself hereby warranted to read it also, reads it, and then sends it by a boy who waits in the house. I, in the meantime, had come home; it might be half-past three when I received the following note: 'Might I beg of you to lend me your pistols for a journey which I am about to take?—J.'[1] As I knew nothing of all this that I have told you, or of his principles, having never had any particular intercourse with him, I had not the least hesitation in sending him the pistols.

"The servant had read in the note that his master intended to make a journey, and indeed the latter had himself told him so, also had ordered everything for his journey the next morning at six o'clock, even the *friseur*, without his (the servant's) knowing whither, or with whom, or in what way. But as Jerusalem always kept his engagements secret from him, this did not arouse his suspicion. Nevertheless he thought to himself: 'Is master perhaps going secretly to Brunswick, leaving me here alone?' &c. He had to take the pistols to a gunmaker's to get them loaded.

"The whole afternoon Jerusalem was busy alone; rummaged among his papers, wrote, walked, as the people below in the house heard, rapidly up and down the room. He also went out several times, and paid his small debts; he had taken a pair of ruffles, he said to the servant; they did not satisfy him, he must return them to the tradesman; if he did not like to take them again, there was the money for them, which in fact the tradesman preferred.

"About seven o'clock the Italian master came to him. He

[1] "*Dürfe ich Ew. Wohlgeb. wohl zu einer vorhabenden Reise um ihre Pistolen gehorsamst ersuchen?*" The German epistolary forms of civility are not translatable.

ound him restless and out of humour. He complained that e had his hypochondriasis again strongly, and about various ings; said also, that the best he could do would be to take imself out of the world. The Italian urged upon him very eriously that such passions must be repressed by philosophy, c. Jerusalem: That is not so easily done; he would rather e alone to-day, he might leave him, &c. The Italian: He ust go into society, amuse himself, &c. Jerusalem: Well, e was going out again. The Italian, seeing the pistols on he table, is anxious about the result, goes away at eight 'clock and to Kielmansegge, to whom he talks of nothing ut Jerusalem, his restlessness and discontent, without how-ver mentioning his anxiety, because he believed that he ight be laughed at for it.

"The servant went to Jerusalem to take off his boots. But e said, he was going out again; as he really did, before the ilberthor on the Starke Weide and elsewhere in the streets, here, with his hat pressed over his eyes, he rushed by several ersons, with rapid steps, without seeing any one. He was so seen about this time standing a long time by the river, in position as if he meant to throw himself in (so they say).

"Before nine o'clock he comes home, says to the servant hat there must be more fuel put in the stove, because he shall ot go to bed yet, also tells him to get everything ready for x o'clock in the morning, and has a pint of wine brought to im. The servant, that he may be ready very early, because is master was always very punctual, goes to bed in his clothes.

"As soon as Jerusalem was alone, he seems to have pre-ared everything for the dreadful deed. He tore up his cor-espondence and threw it under the table, as I have myself een. He wrote two letters, one to his relations, the other H.; it is thought also that he wrote one to the ambas-dor Höffler, which the latter perhaps suppresses. They lay the writing-table. The first, which the medical man saw e next morning, contained in substance only what follows, Dr. Held, who read it, related to me:

"'Dear father, dear mother, dear sisters and brother-in-law, rgive your unhappy son and brother; God, God bless you!'

"In the second, he entreated H. for forgiveness that he had sturbed the peace and happiness of his married life, and eated dissension between this dear couple, &c. At first s inclination for H.'s wife had been only virtuous, &c. It said to have been three sheets long, and to have ended

thus:—'One o'clock. In the other life we shall see each other again.' (In all probability he shot himself immediately on finishing this letter.)"

The sensation produced in Wetzlar by this suicide was immense. People who had scarcely seen Jerusalem were unable to quiet their agitation; many could not sleep; the women especially felt the deepest interest in the fate of this unhappy youth; and *Werther* found a public ready for it.

With these materials in hand, let us take up the novel to see how Goethe employs them. Werther is a man who, not having yet learned self-mastery, imagines that his immense desires are proofs of immense superiority: one of those of whom it has been wittily said that they fancy themselves great painters because they paint with a big brush. He laughs at all rules, whether they be rules of Art, or rules which Convention builds like walls around our daily life. He hates order—in speech, in writing, in costume, in office. In a word he hates all control. Gervinus remarks that he turns from men to children because they do not pain him, and from them to Nature because she does not contradict him; from truth to poetry, and in poetry from the clear world of Homer to the formless world of Ossian. Very characteristic of the epoch is the boundless enthusiasm inspired by Ossian, whose rhetorical trash the Germans hailed as the finest expression of *Nature's* poetry. Old Samuel Johnson's stern, clear sense saw into the very heart of this subject when he said, "Sir, a man might write such stuff for ever if he would but *abandon* his mind to it." It is abandonment of the mind, throwing the reins on the horse's neck, which makes such writing possible; and it was precisely this abandonment to impulse this disregard of the grave remonstrances of reason and good sense, which distinguished the Werther epoch.

Werther is not Goethe. Werther perishes because he is wretched, and is wretched because he is so weak. Goethe was "king over himself." He saw the danger, and evaded it; tore himself away from the woman he loved, instead of continuing in a dangerous position. Yet although Werther is not Goethe, there is one part of Goethe living in Werther. This is visible in the incidents and language as well as in the character. It is the part we see reappearing under the various masks of Weislingen, Clavigo, Faust, Fernando, Edward, Meister, and Tasso, which no critic will call the same last figure variously draped, but which every critic must see below

o one and the same genus: men of strong desires and weak olitions, wavering impressionable natures unable to attain elf-mastery. Goethe was one of those who are wavering ecause impressionable, but whose wavering is not weakness; ney oscillate, but they return into the direct path which their ills have prescribed. He was tender as well as impression- ble. He could not be stern, but he could be resolute. He ad only therefore, in imagination, to keep in abeyance the ative force of resolution which gave him mastery, and in nat abeyance a weak wavering character stood before him, ne original of which was himself.

When a man delineates himself, he always shrinks from a omplete confession. Our moral nature has its modesty. trong as the impulse may be to drag into light that which lies idden in the recesses of the soul, pleased as we may be to reate images of ourselves, we involuntarily keep back some- ning, and refuse to identify ourselves with the creation. There re few things more irritating than the pretension of another o completely understand us. Hence authors never thoroughly ortray themselves. Byron, utterly without self-command, fond of heroes proud and self-containing. Goethe, the rongest of men, makes heroes the footballs of circumstance. ut he also draws from his other half the calm, self-sustaining naracters. Thus we have the antithesis of Götz and Weis- ngen—Albert and Werther—Carlos and Clavigo—Jarno and Ieister—Antonio and Tasso—the Captain and Edward; and eepened in colouring, Mephistopheles and Faust.

Werther is not much read nowadays, especially in England, here it labours under the double disadvantage of a bad name nd an execrable translation. Yet it is well worth reading in ne original, where it will be found very unlike the notion of it urrent among us. I remember many years ago reading it in ne execrable English version with astonishment and contempt; is contempt remained, until accidentally falling in with a panish translation, the exquisite beauty of the pictures changed y feeling into admiration, and Goethe's own wonderful prose terwards fixed that admiration for ever. It is a masterpiece f style; we may look through German literature in vain for ch clear sunny pictures, fulness of life, and delicately managed mplicity. Its style is one continuous strain of music, which, strained within the limits of prose, fulfils all the conditions f poetry; dulcet as the sound of falling waters, and as full of veet melancholy as an autumnal eve.

Nothing can be simpler than the structure of this boo wherein, as M. Marmier well remarks,[1] every detail is s arranged as to lay bare the sufferings of a diseased spiri Werther arrives at his chosen retreat, believing himself cure and anticipating perfect happiness. He is painter and poe The fresh spring mornings, the sweet cool evenings, sooth and strengthen him. He selects a place under the limes to rea and dream away the hours. There he brings his pencil an his Homer. Everything interests him—the old woman wh brings his coffee, the children who play around him, the sto of a poor family. In this serene convalescence he meets wit Charlotte, and a new passion agitates his soul. His simp uniform existence becomes changed. He endeavours by bodi activity to charm away his desires. The days no long resemble each other: now ecstatic with hope, now crushe with despair. Winter comes: cold, sad, gloomy. He mu away. He departs, and mingles with the world, but the worl disgusts him. The monotony and emptiness of official li are intolerable to his pretensions; the parchment pride of th noblesse is insulting to his sense of superiority. He returns t the peaceful scene of his former contentment, and finds indee Charlotte, the children, his favourite woods and walks, but no the calmness which he seeks. The hopelessness of his positio overwhelms him. Disgusted with the world—unsatisfied in h cravings—he dies by his own hand.

Rosenkrantz—in the true spirit of that criticism which seek everywhere for meanings more recondite than the autho dreamt of—thinks that Goethe exhibits great art in makin Werther a diplomatist, because a diplomatist is a man *shams* (*scheinthuer*); but the truth is, Goethe made hi precisely what he found him. His art is truth. He is s great an artist that the simplest realities have to him signifi ance. Charlotte cutting bread and butter for the children- the scene of the ball—the children clinging round Werther f sugar, and pictures of that kind, betray so little inventi power, that they have excited the ridicule of some Engli critics to whom poetry is a thing of pomp, not the beautif vesture of reality. The beauty and art of *Werther* is not the incidents (a Dumas would shrug despairing shoulde over such invention), but in the representation. What *is* A but Representation?[2]

[1] *Etudes sur Goethe*, p. 11.

[2] "*L'art n'est qu'une forme*," says George Sand, with a truth few crit

The effect of *Werther* was prodigious. "That nameless nrest," says Carlyle, "the blind struggle of a soul in bondage, hat high, sad, longing discontent which was agitating every osom, had driven Goethe almost to despair. All felt it; he lone could give it voice. And here lies the secret of his opularity; in his deep, susceptive heart he felt a thousand mes more keenly what every one was feeling; with the reative gift which belonged to him as a poet, he bodied it rth into visible shape, gave it a local habitation and a name; nd so made himself the spokesman of his generation. *Verther* is but the cry of that dim, rooted pain under which l thoughtful men of a certain age were languishing: it paints e misery, it passionately utters the complaint; and heart nd voice all over Europe loudly and at once respond to it. rue it prescribes no remedy; for that was a far different, far rder enterprise, to which other years and a higher culture ere required; but even this utterance of pain, even this little, r the present is grasped at, and with eager sympathy appro- iated in every bosom. If Byron's life weariness, his moody elancholy, and mad, stormful indignation, borne on the tones a wild, and quite artless melody, could pierce so deep into any a British heart, now that the whole matter is no longer w—is indeed old and trite—we may judge with what vehe- ent acceptance this *Werther* must have been welcomed, ming, as it did, like a voice from the unknown regions; the st thrilling peal of that impassioned dirge which, in country er country, men's ears have listened to till they were deaf to else. For *Werther*, infusing itself into the core and whole irit of literature, gave birth to a race of sentimentalists who ve raged and wailed in every part of the world, till the tter light dawned on them, or, at worst, exhausted nature d herself to sleep, and it was discovered that lamenting was productive labour. These funereal choristers, in Germany, loud, haggard, tumultuous, as well as tearful class, were med the *Kraftmänner*, or Powermen; but have long since, e sick children, cried themselves to rest."[1]

Perhaps there never was a fiction which so startled and raptured the world. Men of all kinds and classes were ved by it. It was the companion of Napoleon, when in

e penetrated; let me add Goethe's own opinion—surely of weight in such ters: "None will comprehend the simple truth that the highest, the only ration of art is representation" (*Gestaltung*).

Miscellanies, vol. i. p. 272.

Egypt; it penetrated into China. To convey in a sentenc its wondrous popularity, we may state that in Germany i became a people's book, hawked about the streets, printed o miserable paper, like an ancient ballad; and in the Chines empire, Charlotte and Werther were modelled in porcelain.[1]

Objectors of course there were. Lessing, for example, wh neither suffered from the disease of the epoch, nor tolerate any approach to sentimentality, thought so fiery a productio ought to have a cold epilogue to counteract it. "Do yo believe," he wrote, "that any Roman or Grecian youth woul *thus* and *therefore* have committed suicide? Certainly no They knew how to guard themselves from the extravagancie of love, and in the days of Socrates such an ἐξ ἔρωτος κατοχ whom τι τολμᾷν παρὰ φύσιν impelled, would scarcely be pa doned even by a girl. Such little-great questionable origina only suit our Christian culture, which knows so well how t transform a corporeal necessity into a spiritual perfection. S worthy Goethe, let us have a concluding chapter; and th more cynical the better."[2] This is a misstatement of th

[1] While in Italy, he received a letter from a young Frenchman, who saic "Oui, Monsieur, je vous dois la meilleure action de ma vie, par conséquent, racine de plusieurs autres, et pour moi votre livre est bon. Si j'avais le bo heur d'habiter le même pays que vous, j'irais vous embrasser, et vous dire m secret; mais malheureusement j'en habite un où personne ne croirait au mo qui vient de me déterminer à cette démarche. Soyez satisfait, Monsieu d'avoir pu à trois cents lieues de votre demeure ramener le cœur d'un jeu homme à l'honnêteté et à la vertu, toute une famille va être tranquille, et m cœur jouit d'une bonne action."

Let me not forget the visit of his English admirer, who accosted him on t stairs with "You must be the author of *Werther!*" adding that he could n wait a moment longer, all he wanted to say was this: "I will not repeat wh you must have heard from thousands, for indeed your work has not affect me so much as it has others; but when I think what it required to write su a book, I am lost in astonishment." Having eased his mind of this weight, wished Goethe a hearty farewell, and ran down stairs.

A similar story is told by Schiller in a letter to Körner. "A shrivell figure entered my room, and asked me if I was not Councillor Schiller. replied in the affirmative. 'I heard that you were here, and could not restra myself from seeing the author of *Don Carlos*.' '*Gehorsamer Diener!* yc most obedient servant,' said I; 'whom have I the honour of addressing?' have not the happiness of being known to you. My name is Vulpius.' 'I a indebted to you for your politeness; unluckily, I have an engagement.' 'C sir, I beg you won't mention it. I am quite satisfied with having seen you.'" *Briefwechsel*, i. p. 105.

At the risk of swelling this note to unreasonable dimensions, I must qu a passage from *Pliny's Letters*, which records a similar anecdote: "Nu quamne legisti Gaditanum quemdam Titi Livii nomine gloriaque commot ad visendum eum ab ultimo terrarum orbe venisse, statimque ut vide abiisse?"—*Lib.* II. *Ep.* iii.

[2] Lessing: *Werke*, x. p. 225, Letter to Eschenberg.

It is surmised that Lessing's objections to *Werther* were sharpened by

hole question. It is not the extravagance of love which auses Werther's suicide: it is his own diseased moral nature hich makes life insupportable, and which makes unhappy ve the spark that fires the train. Moreover, one reads with urprise this reference to Greek and Roman life, coming from o admirable a scholar as Lessing. He forgot that Sophocles, n the *Antigone*, makes an unhappy lover commit suicide ecause his mistress is lost to him. He forgot, also, that ne Stoics introduced the "fashion" of suicide into Rome; and n Alexandria the Epicureans established a "society for the ppression of life"—the *συναποθανουμενοι* — where, having khausted every pleasure, the members assembled at a feast, ne wine-cup went freely round, and in the midst of this orgie ney quietly put an end to their contemptible existences:— new variation of the conversazione, at which, instead of usic and æsthetic tea, the guests were invited to supper and uicide.

The Berlin Aristarchus—Nicolai—an upright, but narrow-inded man, and a great enemy of all *schwärmerei*, wrote by ay of criticism a parody called the *Joys of Young Werther*, in hich sentimentalism is ridiculed:—Werther shoots himself ith chicken's blood only, and marries Charlotte "and lives ppy all the rest of his life."

Goethe's answer to this was "a burlesque poem called *icolai at Werther's Grave*, which, however, cannot be com-unicated." This poem has been recovered and printed by as.[1] It is exceedingly coarse, and not very humorous. The mirers of Werther, of course, are greatly incensed against icolai; but they forget that Nicolai never denied the talent the work, he only echoed Lessing's objection to its tendency. is criticism, moreover, was but a feather in the scale against e praise which poured in from all sides.

While the public was reading the tragic story of *Werther* rough fast-flowing tears, a painful sense of indignation rose the breasts of Kestner and Charlotte at seeing themselves us dragged into publicity, their story falsified. The narra-e was in many respects too close to reality not to be very ensive in its *deviations* from reality. The figures were un-stakable; and yet they were not the real figures. The

ike at recognising his young friend, Jerusalem, thus brought into a fiction. etter from Weisse to Garve, quoted by APPELL, *Werther und seine Zeit*, ,o, confirms this.

Nachträge zu Goethe's Werke: Lief. i. p. 12.

eager public soon found out who were the principal pe
sonages, and that a real history was at the bottom of th
romance; but as the whole truth could not be known, th
Kestners found themselves in a very false light. They wer
hurt by this indiscretion of their friend; more hurt perhap
than they chose to confess; and we may read, in the followin
fragment of the sketch of the letter sent by Kestner o
receipt of the book, the accents of an offended friend whos
pride restrains the full expression of his anger:

"Your *Werther* might have given me great pleasure, sinc
it could have reminded me of many interesting scenes an
incidents. But as it is, it has in certain respects given m
little edification. You know I like to speak my mind.

"It is true, you have woven something new into eac
person, or have fused several persons into one. So far goo
But if in this interweaving and fusing you had taken couns
of your heart, you would not have so prostituted the re
persons whose features you borrow. You wished to dra
from nature, that your picture might be truthful; and yet yo
have combined so much that is contradictory, that you ha
missed the very mark at which you aimed. The distinguishe
author will revolt against this judgment, but I appeal
reality and truth itself when I pronounce that the artist h
failed. The real Lotte would, in many instances, be griev
if she were like the Lotte you have there painted. I kno
well that it is said to be a character compounded of tw
but the Mrs. H. whom you have partly inwoven was al
incapable of what you attribute to your heroine. But th
expenditure of fiction was not at all necessary to your end,
nature and truth, for it was without any such behaviour
the part of a woman—a behaviour which must ever be di
honourable even to a more than ordinary woman—that Je
salem shot himself.

"The real Lotte, whose friend you nevertheless wish to b
is in your picture, which contains too much of her not
suggest her strongly: is, I say—but no, I will not say it,
pains me already too much only to think it. And Lott
husband—you called him your friend, and God knows that
was so—is with her.

"The miserable creature of an Albert! In spite of
being an alleged fancy picture and not a portrait, it also h
such traits of an original (only external traits, it is true, tha
God, only external), that it is easy to guess the real perso

nd if you wanted to have him act so, need you have made m such a blockhead? that forthwith you might step forward d say, see what a fine fellow I am!"

Kestner here touches on a point of morality in literature orth consideration. While emphatically declaring that the tist must take his materials from reality, must employ his vn experience, and draw the characters he has really known, e must as emphatically declare that he is bound to represent s experience in forms sufficiently different from the reality prevent the public reading actual histories beneath his in- ntion, and recognising the persons he has employed as lay ures, whenever those persons are assigned parts which they uld reject. There is, of course, great difficulty in keeping truth while avoiding the betrayal of actual occurrences; but is a difficulty which is commanded by morality.

Goethe was evidently astounded at the effect his book had oduced on his friends: "I must at once write to you, my ar and angry friends, and free my heart. The thing is done; e book is out; forgive me if you can. I will hear nothing the event has proved how exaggerated your anxiety is, and you have more truly felt, in the book itself, the innocent ngling of fiction and truth. Thou hast, dear Kestner, ex- usted everything, cut away all the ground of my excuse, and t me nothing to say; yet I know not, my heart has still re to say, although I cannot express it. I am silent, but e sweet presentiment I must still retain, and I hope eternal te has that in store for me which will bind us yet closer e to the other. Yes, dear ones, I who am so bound you by love, must still remain debtor to you and your ildren for the uncomfortable hours which my—name it as u will—has given you. . . . And now, my dear ones, when ger rises within you, think, oh think only that your old ethe, ever and ever, and now more than ever, is your n."

Their anger fell. They saw that he had committed an in- cretion, but had done no more. They wrote forgiveness, we gather from this letter Goethe sent on the 21st of vember:

"Here I have thy letter, Kestner! On a strange desk, in ainter's studio, for yesterday I began to paint in oil, I have letter, and must give thee my thanks! Thanks, dear nd! Thou art ever the same good soul! O that I could ing on thy neck, throw myself at Lotte's feet, one, one

minute, and all, all that should be done away with, explaine which I could not make clear with quires of paper! O unbelieving ones! I could exclaim. Ye of little faith! Cou you feel the thousandth part of what Werther is to a thousa hearts, you would not reckon the sacrifice you have ma towards it! Here is a letter, read it, and send me wo quickly what thou thinkest of it, what impression it makes thee. Thou sendest me Hennings' letter; he does not co demn me; he excuses me. Dear brother Kestner! if you w wait, you shall be contented. I would not, to save my ov life, call back Werther, and believe me, believe in me, t anxieties, thy *gravamina* will vanish like phantoms of t night if thou hast patience; and then, between this and year, I promise you in the most affectionate, peculiar, ferve manner, to disperse, as if it were a mere north-wind fog a mist, whatever may remain of suspicion, misinterpretatic &c., in the gossiping public, though it is a herd of swin Werther must—must be! You do not feel *him*, you only fe *me* and *yourselves;* and that which you call *stuck on*, and spite of you, and others, is *interwoven*. If I live, it is th I have to thank for it; thus thou art not Albert. And thus

"Give Lotte a warm greeting for me, and say to her: 'know that your name is uttered by a thousand hallowed li with reverence, is surely an equivalent for anxieties whi would scarcely, apart from anything else, vex a person lo in common life, where one is at the mercy of every tattler.'

"If you are generous and do not worry me, I will send y letters, cries, sighs after Werther, and if you have faith, belie that all will be well, and gossip is nothing, and weigh well yc philosopher's letter, which I have kissed.

"O then!—hast not felt how the man embraces th consoles thee, and in thy—in Lotte's worth, finds consolati enough under the wretchedness which has terrified you ev in the fiction. Lotte, farewell,—Kestner, love me, and not worry me."

The pride of the author in his darling breaks out in t letter, now his friends have forgiven him. We must ad that Kestner had reason to be annoyed; the more so as friends, identifying him with the story, wrote sympathetica about it. He had to reply to Hennings on the subject, a in telling him the true story, begged him to correct the fa reports. He says: "In the first part of *Werther*, Wert is Goethe himself. In Lotte and Albert he has borrow

aits from us, my wife and myself. Many of the scenes are ite true, and yet partly altered; others are, at least in our story, unreal. For the sake of the second part, and in der to prepare for the death of Werther, he has introduced rious things into the first part which do not at all belong to . For example, Lotte has never either with Goethe or with y one else stood in the intimate relation which is there scribed; in this we have certainly great reason to be offended th him, for several accessory circumstances are too true and o well known for people not to point to us. He regrets it w, but of what use is that to us? It is true he has a great gard for my wife; but he ought to have depicted her more thfully in this point, that she was too wise and delicate ever let him go so far as is represented in the first part. She haved to him in such way as to make her far dearer to me an before, if this had been possible. Moreover, our engage- ent was never made public, though not, it is true, kept a cret: still she was too bashful ever to confess it to any one. nd there was no engagement between us but that of hearts. was not till shortly before my departure (when Goethe had eady been a year away from Wetzlar at Frankfurt, and the sguised Werther had been dead half a year) that we were arried. After the lapse of a year, since our residence here, have become father and mother. The dear boy lives still, d gives us, thank God, much joy. For the rest, there is in erther much of Goethe's character and manner of thinking. tte's portrait is completely that of my wife. Albert might ve been made a little more ardent. The second part of *Werther* has nothing whatever to do with us. . . . When oethe had printed his book, he sent us an early copy, and ought we should fall into raptures with what he had done. tt we at once saw what would be the effect, and your letter nfirms our fears. I wrote very angrily to him. He then the first time saw what he had done; but the book was nted, and he hoped our fears were idle." In another letter the same, Kestner says: "You have no idea what a man he But when his great fire has somewhat burnt itself out, n we shall all have the greatest joy in him."

We have thus brought to a close the history of *Werther*, its mposition and effect: a history so important in the bio- phy of its author, that we might have been excused for ving devoted so much space to it, even if the letters, which ve furnished the evidence, did not throw so strong a light

upon a period very inadequately represented in the *Wahrhe und Dichtung*.

On the 28th August 1849, the hundredth anniversary of th great poet's birth, when all Germany joined in a jubilee, small marble monument was erected in the well-know *Wertherplatz* without the Wetzlar gates, where Goethe wa wont to sit and muse; three lime trees are planted round i bearing this inscription:—

RUHEPLATZ DES DICHTERS

GOETHE

ZU SEINEM ANDENKEN FRISCH BEPFLANZT

BEI DER JUBELFEIER AM 28 AUG. 1849.

CHAPTER VI

THE LITERARY LION

GOETHE was now at the perilous juncture in an author's caree when having just achieved a splendid success, he is in dang either of again snatching at laurels in presumptuous haste, of suffering himself to repose upon the laurels he has wo talking of greatness, instead of learning to be great. Bo perils he avoided. He neither traded on his renown, n conceived that his education was complete. Wisely refrainii from completing fresh important works, he kept up the practi of his art by trifles, and the education of his genius by serio studies.

Among these trifles are *Clavigo*, the *Jahrmarktsfest Plundersweilen*, and the *Prolog zu Bahrdt's Neuesten Offe barungen*. For the composition of *Clavigo* we must retra our steps a little, and once more see him in the Frankfu circle during the summer of 1774, that is, before the *publicati* of *Werther*, which was delayed till October. In his siste pleasant circle we have already noticed Antoinette Gero who was fascinating enough to fix his attentions. They we accustomed to meet once a week, in picnics and pleasu parties; at one of these it was agreed to institute a marria

ottery. He thus speaks of it:—"Every week lots were drawn o determine the couples who should be symbolically wedded; or it was supposed that every one knew well enough how overs should conduct themselves, but few had any proper onceptions of the requisite demeanour between man and wife. eneral rules were laid down to the effect that these wedded ouples should preserve a polite indifference, not sitting near ach other, nor speaking to each other too often, much less ndulging in anything like caresses. At the same time, side y side with this polite indifference, this well-bred calm, any- ing like discord or suspicion was to be sedulously avoided; nd whoever succeeded in gaining the affections of his wife ithout using the importunities of a lover, was supposed to ave achieved their ideal. Much sportive confusion and greeable pleasantry of course arose from this scheme." rangely enough, to him it fell thrice to have the same girl ppointed by hazard to fill the place of his wife. When fate ad brought them together for the third time, it was resolved nanimously that they should be no longer separated, that aven had spoken, and that hereafter they were to consider emselves as man and wife, and not to draw lots as the others d. At these réunions something new was generally read oud by one of the party. One evening Goethe brought th him as a novelty the *Mémoire* of Beaumarchais. During e conversation which ensued, Goethe's partner said to him: If I were thy liege lady, and not thy wife, I would command ee to change this memoir into a play, to which it seems well ited." He answered: "That thou mayst see, my love, that ge lady and wife are one, I here undertake that this day eek I will read a play on this very matter." So bold a omise excited astonishment, but he resolved on fulfilling it. What, in such cases," he says, "is termed invention, was th me spontaneous. While escorting my titulary wife home was silent; and on her inquiring the cause, I told her that was thinking out the play, and had already got into the ddle of it—intending to show her how gladly I would do ything to please her. Upon which she pressed my hand, d I snatched a kiss. 'Thou must not step out of thy aracter,' she exclaimed; 'they say it is not proper for rried folks to be loving.' 'Let them say what they please,' replied, 'we will have it our own way.'"

He confesses that before reading the memoir aloud, the bject had appeared to him eminently dramatic; though,

without such a stimulus as he had received, this piece, like so many others, would have remained among the number of *possible* creations. The only novelty in it was his mode of treating the villains. He was weary of those characters so frequently represented, who, from revenge, or from hate, or from trivial motives, ruin a noble nature; and he wished in Carlos to show the working of clear good sense, against passion and inclination. Justified by the precedent of Shakspeare, he translated, word for word, such portions of the memoir as were dramatic; borrowing the dénouement from an English ballad.[1] He was ready before the week expired and read the piece to a delighted audience.

A few words on this memoir may be useful. Beaumarchais had two sisters living in Madrid, one married to an architect, the other, Marie, engaged to Clavijo, a young author without fortune. No sooner had Clavijo obtained the office he had long solicited, than he refused to fulfil his promise. Beaumarchais hurried to Madrid; his object was twofold: to save the reputation of his sister, and to put a little speculation of his own on foot. He sought Clavijo, and by his sangfroid and courage extorted from him a written avowal of his contemptible conduct. No sooner is this settled, than Clavijo, alarmed at the consequences, solicits a reconciliation with Marie, offering to marry her. Beaumarchais consents, but just as the marriage is about to take place he learns that Clavijo is secretly conspiring against him, accusing him of having extorted the marriage by force, in consequence of which he has procured an order from the government to expel Beaumarchais from Madrid. Irritated at such villainy, Beaumarchais goes to the ministers, reaches the king, and avenges himself by getting Clavijo dismissed from his post. This is in brief, the substance of the *Mémoire*, which appeared in February 1774. The adventure occurred in 1764, so that Clavijo, who subsequently became a distinguished writer might have seen himself not only held up to odium in the sparkling pages of Beaumarchais, but represented on the stage of every German theatre. He died in 1806, vice-president of the Natural History Society in Madrid, having previously translated Buffon, and edited the *Mercurio historico y politico de Madrid*. We must suppose that Goethe knew nothing of the existence of Clavijo when he wrote the drama.

[1] So he says: but his memory deceived him. The ballad was an old German ballad, *Das Lied vom Herren und der Magd*. See *Herder's Nachlass*, i. 159.

With Beaumarchais in our hands it is curious to read *Clavigo*, which is as close a reproduction as the dramatic rm admits; and is an evidence that Goethe did wisely in ot at once proceeding to complete *Faust* (fragments of which ere written) or *Cæsar*. He would infallibly have repeated mself. He has repeated himself in *Clavigo:* the external rcumstances are changed, but the experience is the same. avigo is another Weislingen, and was meant to be so: "I ve written a tragedy," Goethe writes to Schönborn, "*Clavigo*, modern anecdote, dramatised with the greatest simplicity d heartfelt truth. My hero is an irresolute, half-great, half-tle man, the pendant to Weislingen, or rather Weislingen mself as the chief person." He has well portrayed the ak ambitious nature of one who hopes to rise still higher the world, but feels his career obstructed by a passion ich made him happy in the obscure days of penniless uth. The popular author and court favourite aspires to me woman of rank; an aspiration in which he is encouraged his friend Carlos, who mockingly strips off the garlands th which the poet's imagination had decked his mistress.

Marie is a weak, sensitive creature, without much indi-duality, and is perhaps the poorest sketch Goethe has given a woman. There is, however, one little touch which ows the poet; it is a sentence which escapes Marie, when avigo returns repentant to her feet, appealing to her affec-n: she throws herself on his neck, exclaiming, "Ah, sister, ence knows he that I love him so—*woher weiss er dass ich so liebe!*"

Marie is overjoyed at Clavigo's return, but her joy is brief. e demon of ambition, aided by the cold sarcasms of Carlos whom we see the germ of Mephistopheles), once more ubles Clavigo, and turns him from a marriage so ill suited his hopes. Carlos bitterly, but truly, says to him, "There nothing in the world so pitiable as an undecided man, who vers between two feelings, hoping to reconcile them." He gests that Beaumarchais should be assassinated. "He who ers the assassination of the brother, pantomimically inti-tes that he will have nothing to do with the sister," adds rlos, quite in the Mephistophelic tone. They determine on ontemptible plan. Beaumarchais is to be imprisoned for ing insulted and threatened Clavigo under his own roof. e order for arrest arrives, and Marie dies broken-hearted at treachery of her lover.

Up to this point—short at least of the death of Marie—Beaumarchais' *Mémoire* has been faithfully followed; a fift act is added, with a dénouement to fit it for the stage.

Powerful as this scene is in theatrical effect, one cannot b admit that æsthetically it is poor and almost commonplac The clumsiness by which the meeting is contrived has bee noticed by Rosenkranz.[1] Clavigo is seeking Carlos; he orde the servant who lights the way, *not* to pass through the stre where the Beaumarchais family resides, yet the servant actuall leads him there because it is the shorter route. The who tone of this fifth act is not in harmony with what precede The act is *grafted on*—it does not *grow out of*—the subject.

As a stage play the interest is great: the situations are effe tive; the dramatic collision perfect; the plot is clearly an rapidly evolved; the language vigorous, passionate, an pointed. But it must not be tried by any high standar Merck, anxious about his friend's reputation, would not co sent to judge the play according to the theatre-standard, b exclaimed, "Such trash as this you must not write again others can do that!" Goethe says, that in this Merck wa wrong, and for the first time did him an injury. "We shou not in all things transcend the notions which men have alread formed; it is right that much should be done in accordan with the common way of thinking. Had I written a doze such pieces (and it would have been easy to do so with a litt stimulus), three or four of them would perhaps have kept the place upon the stage."

This can scarcely be accepted as conclusive reasonin Merck might have replied, "Perhaps so; but you have geni fit for higher things than stage plays." Nevertheless, as befo hinted, I think Goethe was right in his course, although th reasons he alleges are unsatisfactory. *Clavigo*, like the oth trifles he composed at this period, must be regarded as th sketches with which an artist fills his portfolio, not the worl which are to brighten galleries. The impulse to create wa imperious; if trifles were demanded, he created trifles. H immense activity was forced to expend itself on minor work because he dimly felt himself unripe for greater works.

He was beginning to feel himself a man of consequenc the notable men of the day eagerly sought his acquaintanc Among these men we must note Klopstock, Lavater, Basedo

[1] *Goethe und Seine Werke*, p. 185.

acobi, and the Stolbergs. Correspondence led to personal ntercourse. Klopstock arrived in Frankfurt in this October 774, just before *Werther* appeared. Goethe saw him, read the agments of *Faust* to him, and discussed skating with him. But he great religious poet was too far removed from the strivings f his young rival to conceive that attachment for him which e felt for men like the Stolbergs, or to inspire Goethe with ny keen sympathy.

In June, Lavater also came to Frankfurt. This was a few nonths before Klopstock's visit. He had commenced a cor-espondence with Goethe on the occasion of the *Briefe des Pastors*. Those were great days of correspondence. Letters ere written to be read in circles, and were shown about like he last new poem. Lavater pestered his friends for their ortraits, and for ideal portraits (according to their con-eption) of our Saviour, all of which were destined for the ork on *Physiognomy* on which he was then engaged. The rtist who took Goethe's portrait sent Lavater the portrait f Bahrdt instead, to see what he would make of it; the hysiognomist was not taken in; he stoutly denied the ossibility of such a resemblance. Yet when he saw the ctual Goethe he was not satisfied. He gazed in astonish-ent, exclaiming "*Bist's?* Art thou he?" "*Ich bin's.* I n he," was the answer; and the two embraced each ther. Still the physiognomist was dissatisfied. "I answered m with my native and acquired realism, that as God had illed to make me what I was, he, Lavater, must even so cept me."

The first surprise over, they began to converse on the eightiest topics. Their sympathy was much greater than ppears in Goethe's narrative, written many years after the haracters of both had developed themselves: Goethe's into hat we shall subsequently see; Lavater's into that super-itious dogmatism and priestly sophistication which exasper-ed and alienated many of his friends.

Lavater forms a curious figure in the history of those days: compound of the intolerant priest, and the factitious senti-entalist. He had fine talents, and a streak of genius, but he as ruined by vanity. In his autobiographic sketch [1] he has presented himself indicating as a child the part he was to ay as a man. Like many other children, he formed for him-

[1] See GESSNER'S *Biographie Lavaters.*

self a peculiar and intimate relation with God, which mad him look upon his playfellows with scorn and pity, becaus they did not share his "need and use of God." He praye for wonders, and the wonders came. God corrected his schoo exercises. God concealed his many faults, and brought t light his virtuous deeds. In fact, Lavater was said to hav been "from the beginning the friend of Lies, who stooped t the basest flatteries to gain influence." To this flatterin cringing softness he united the spirit of priestly dominatio His first works made a great sensation. In 1769 he translate Bonnet's *Palingénésie*, adding notes in a strain of religiou sentimentalism then very acceptable. At a time when th critics were rehabilitating Homer and the early singers, it wa natural that the religious world should attempt a restoration o the early Apostolic spirit. At a time when belief in poeti inspiration was a first article of the creed, belief in propheti inspiration found eager followers. I have already touched o the sentimental extravagance of the time. The lovely Countes Branconi writes to him: "O toi chéri pour la vie, l'âme d mon âme! Ton mouchoir, tes cheveux, sont pour moi ce qu mes jarretières sont pour toi!" &c., which is surpassed by wha he allowed to be addressed to him by another admirer: "O that I could lie on thy breast in Sabbath holy evening stillnes —oh thou angel!" This kind of rhodomontade went a round. They wept, and were wept on.

At the time of his arrival in Frankfurt, Lavater was in th first flush of renown. Goethe was peculiarly attracted to hin not only by the singularity of his character, but by a certai community of religious *sentiment*. Community of creed ther was not, and could not be. What Goethe *felt* we may gathe from his attachment to Fräulein von Klettenberg; what h *thought* may be seen in such letters as this to Pfenninger, friend of Lavater's: "Believe me, dear brother, the time wi come when we shall understand each other. You talk to m as a sceptic, who wishes to *understand*—to have all *demon strated*—who has had no experience. The contrary of all thi is the fact. Am I not more resigned in matters of Unde standing and Demonstration than you are? I am, perhaps, fool to express myself in your language to please you. I ough by a purely experimental psychology, to place my inmost bein before you to show that I am a man, and hence can only fe as other men feel, and that all which appears contradictio between us is only dispute about words, arising from m

ability to feel things under other combinations than those ctually felt by me, and hence, in expressing their relation to ie, I name them differently, which has been the eternal source f controversy, and will for ever remain so. And yet you ways want to oppress me with *evidences*. Wherefore? Do I eed evidence of my own existence? Evidence that I feel? only treasure, love, and demand evidences which convince e that thousands (or even one) have felt before me that which rengthens and invigorates me. And thus to me the word of an becomes like unto the word of God. With my whole ul, I throw myself upon the neck of my brother: Moses, rophet, Evangelist, Apostle, Spinoza, or Machiavelli! To ch, however, I would say: Dear friend, it is with you as it is ith me. Certain details you apprehend clearly and power-lly, but the whole can no more be conceived by you than y me."

He names Spinoza in this very remarkable passage; and e whole letter seems like a reproduction of the passage in e *Ethics*, where that great thinker, anticipating modern sychology, shows "that each person judges of things accord-g to the disposition of his brain, or rather accepts the fections of his imagination as real things. It is no wonder erefore (as we may note in passing) that so many contro-rsies have arisen among men, and that these controversies ve at last given birth to scepticism. For although human odies are alike in many things, there are more in which they ffer, and thus what to one appears good, to another appears il; what to one appears order, to another appears confusion; hat to one is pleasant, to another is unpleasant."[1]

It is unnecessary to interrupt the narrative here by more osely scrutinising his studies of Spinoza; enough, if the fore-ing citation has made present to our minds the probable rentage of Goethe's opinions. The contrast between avater's Christianity and the Christianity of Fräulein von ettenberg interested him, and gave him matter for thought. e agreed somewhat with both, but he agreed perfectly with ither. The difference between Faith and Knowledge he

[1] "Que omnia satis ostendunt, unumquemque *pro dispositione cerebri de us judicasse*, vel potius imaginationis affectiones pro rebus accepisse. Quare n mirum est (ut hoc etiam obiter notemus) quod inter homines tot, quot ex-imur, controversiæ ortæ sint ex quibus tandem Scepticismus. Nam quam-humana corpora in multus conveniunt, in plurimis tamen discrepant, et o id quod uni bonum alteri malum videtur; quod uni ordinatum, alteri fusum; quod uni gratum, alteri ingratum est."—*Ethices: Pars* i. *Append.*

thus reconciled: "In Faith everything depends on the fact of believing; *what* we believe is quite secondary. Faith is a profound sense of security, springing from confidence in the All-powerful, Inscrutable Being. The strength of this confidence is the main point. But *what* we think of this Being depends on other faculties, or even on other circumstances, and is altogether indifferent. Faith is a holy vessel, into which every man may pour his feelings, his understanding, and his imagination, as entirely as he can. Knowledge is the antipode of Faith. Therein the point is not *whether* we know, but *what* we know, *how much* we know, and *how well* we know it. Hence men may dispute about knowledge, because it can be widened, corrected; but not about Faith."

So strong was the attraction of Lavater's society that Goethe accompanied him to Ems. The journey was charming; beautiful summer weather, and Lavater's cheerful gaiety formed pleasant accompaniments to their religious discussions. On returning to Frankfurt, another and very different celebrity was there to distract his attention—Basedow, the education reformer. No greater contrast to Lavater could have been picked out of the celebrities of that day. Lavater was handsome, clean, cheerful, flattering, insinuating, devout; Basedow ugly, dirty among the dirty, sarcastic, domineering, and aggressively heterodox. One tried to restore Apostolic Christianity; the other could not restrain the most insolent sarcasms on the Bible, the Trinity, and every form of Christian creed. One set up as a Prophet, the other as a Pedagogue.

Basedow (born 1723) was also early in indicating his future part. At school the wild and dirty boy manifested rebellious energy against all system and all method; studied in a desultory, omnivorous manner, as if to fit himself for everything; ran away from home, and became a lackey in a nobleman's house; caught up Rousseau's doctrine about a state of nature which he applied to Education; wrote endless works, or rather incessant repetitions of one work; shouted with such lusty lungs that men could not but hear him; appealed to the nation for support in his philanthropic schemes; collected "a rent" from philanthropists and dupes; attacked established institutions, and parenthetically all Christian tenets; and proved himself a man of restless energy, and of vast and comprehensive ignorance. He made considerable noise in the world; and in private lived somewhat the life of a restless hound who has taken to philanthropy and freethinking.

Much as such a character was opposed to his own, Goethe, ager and inquiring, felt an attraction towards it, as towards character to study. Like many other studies, this had its rawbacks. He was forced to endure the incessant smoking, nd incessant sarcasms of the dirty educationist. The stench e endured with firmness; the anti-Christian tirades he nswered with paradoxes wilder than any he opposed. "Such splendid opportunity of exercising, if not of elevating, my ind," he says, "was not to be thrown away; so prevailing n my father and friends to undertake my law business, I nce more set off for the Rhine in Basedow's company." asedow filled the carriage with smoke, and killed the time ith discussions. On the way they fell in with Lavater, and e three visited several chateaux, especially those of noble dies, everywhere anxious to receive the literary Lions. oethe, we may parenthetically note, is in error when he ys that he was on this voyage greatly pestered by the women anting to know all about the truth of *Werther;* the fact being at *Werther* did not appear until the following October; r although the exigencies of my narrative have caused a rtain anticipation in chronology, this journey with Lavater d Basedow, here made to follow the publication of *Werther*, me *before* it in Goethe's life. If we are not to believe at the women crowded round him with questions about otte, we can readily believe that children crowded round m, begging him to tell them stories.

Wild and "genius-like" was his demeanour. "Basedow d I," he says, "seemed to be ambitious of proving who uld behave the most outrageously." Very characteristic is e glimpse we catch of him quitting the ball-room, after a ating dance, and rushing up to Basedow's room. The hilanthropist did not go to bed. He threw himself in his othes upon the bed, and there, in a room full of tobacco oke and bad air, dictated to his scribe. When fatigue ercame him, he slept awhile, his scribe remaining there, n in hand, awaiting the awakening of the Philanthropist, o, on opening his eyes, at once resumed the flow of his tation. Into such a room sprang the dance-heated youth, gan a fierce discussion on some problem previously mooted tween them, hurried off again to look into the eyes of some arming partner, and before the door closed, heard Basedow commence dictating.

This union of philosophy with amusement, of restless theo-

rising with animal spirits, indicates the tone of his mind. "I am contented," he said to Lavater, "I am happy. That I feel; and yet the whole centre of my joy is an overflowing yearning towards something which I have not, something which my soul perceives dimly." He could reach that "something" neither through the pious preaching of Lavater, nor through the aggressive preaching of Basedow. Very graphic and ludicrous is the picture he gives of his sitting like a citizen of the world between a prophet on the right and a prophet on the left hand—

> Prophete rechts, Prophete links,
> Das Welt-Kind in der Mitten—

quietly eating a chicken while Lavater explains to a country parson the mystery of the Revelations, and Basedow astonished a dancing-master with a scornful exposure of the inutility of baptism.[1]

Nor could he find this "something" in Jacobi, with whom he now came into sentimental intimacy. He could to some extent sympathise with Jacobi's sentimental cravings, and philosophic, religious aspirations, for he was bitten with the Wertherism of the epoch. He could gaze with him in uneasy ecstasy upon the moonlight quivering on the silent Rhine and pour forth the songs which were murmuring within his breast. He could form a friendship, believing it to rest upon an eternal basis of perfect sympathy; but the inward goad which drove him onwards and onwards, was not to be eradicated until fresh experience had brought about fresh metamorphoses in his development. It is the Youth we have before us here, the Youth in his struggles and many-wandering aims, not the Man grown into clearness.

Jacobi thought that in Goethe he had at length found the man his heart needed, whose influence could sustain and direct him. "The more I consider it," he wrote to Wieland, "the more intensely do I feel how impossible it is for one who has not seen and heard Goethe, to write a word about this extraordinary creation of God's. One needs to be with him but an hour to see that it is utterly absurd to expect him to think and act otherwise than as he does. I do not mean that there is no possibility of an improvement in him; but nothing else is possible with his nature, which develops itself as the flower

[1] See the poem *Diné zu Coblentz*.

bes, as the seed ripens, as the tree grows into the air and owns itself."

Goethe's wonderful *personality* seems almost everywhere to oduce a similar impression. Heinse, the author of *Ardinglo*, writes of him at this period to Gleim: "Goethe was ith us, a beautiful youth of five-and-twenty, who is all genius d strength from head to foot, his heart full of feeling, his ul full of fire and eagle-winged; I know no man in the nole History of Literature who at such an age can be comred to him in fulness and completeness of genius." Those, d they are the mass, who think of him as the calm and ately minister, the old Jupiter throned in Weimar, will feel me difficulty perhaps in recognising the young Apollo of is period. But it must be remembered that not only was young, impetuous, bursting into life, and trying his eagle ngs with wanton confidence of strength; he was, moreover, Rhinelander, with the gay blood of that race stimulated by e light and generous wine of the Rhine—not a Northern iddled with beer. When I contrast young Goethe with a erder, for example, it is always as if a flask of Rhenish ttered beside a seidel of Bavarian beer.

Such answer to his aspirations as the youth could at this riod receive, he found in Spinoza. In his father's library ere was a little book written against Spinoza, one of the ny foolish refutations which that grand old Hebrew's misderstood system called forth. "It made little impression me, for I hated controversies, and always wanted to know *at* a thinker thought, and not what another conceived he *ght to have thought*." It made him, however, once more d the article Spinoza, in *Bayle's Dictionary*, which he found iable—as indeed it is. If a philosophy is to be judged by fruits, the philosophy which guided so great and so virtuous ife as that of Spinoza, could not, Goethe thought, deserve howls of execration which followed Spinozism. He proed the *Opera Posthuma* and studied them; with what fruit the following confession indicate. He is speaking of his v friendship with Jacobi: "The thoughts which Jacobi parted to me flowed immediately from his heart. How ply was I moved when in unlimited confidence he revealed me the deepest wants and aspirations of his soul. From so azing a combination of mental wants, passion, and ideas, could only gather presentiment of what might, perhaps, eafter grow clearer to me. Fortunately, my mind had

already been prepared, if not thoroughly cultivated in th direction, having in some degree appropriated the results an style of thought of an extraordinary man, and though m study had been incomplete and hasty, I was yet alread conscious of important influences derived from this sourc This man, who had wrought so powerfully on me, and wh was destined to affect so deeply my entire mode of thinkin was Spinoza. After looking around the world in vain for th means of developing my strange nature, I met with the *Ethi* of that philosopher. Of what I read *in* the work, and of wha I read *into* it, I can give no account, but I found in it sedative for my passions, and it seemed to unveil a clea broad view over the material and moral world. But wha especially riveted me to him, was the boundless disinterested ness which shone forth in every sentence. That wonderfu sentiment, '*He who truly loves God must not require God love him in return*,' together with all the preliminary pr positions on which it rests, and all the consequences deduce from it, filled my mind.[1] To be disinterested in everythin but most of all in love and friendship, was my highest desir my maxim, my practice, so that that saucy speech of *Philine* 'If I love thee, what is that to thee?' was spoken right out my heart. Moreover, it must not be forgotten here that th closest unions rest on contrasts. The all-equalising calmne of Spinoza was in striking contrast with my all-disturbin activity; his mathematical method was the direct opposite my poetic style of thought and feeling, and that very precisio which was thought ill adapted to moral subjects made me h enthusiastic disciple, his most decided worshipper. Mind an heart, understanding and sense, sought each other with eag affinity, binding together the most different natures. But no all within was fermenting and seething in action and reactio Fritz Jacobi, the first whom I suffered to look into the chao and whose nature was also toiling in its own unfathomab depths, heartily responded to my confidence, and endeavoure to convert me to his own opinions. He, too, felt an unspeak able spiritual want; he, too, would not have it appeased b *outward* aid, but aimed at development and illumination fro *within*. I could not comprehend what he communicated me of the state of his mind; the less, indeed, as I could for no adequate conception of my own. Still, being far in advan

[1] The proposition to which Goethe refers is doubtless the xix. of Book "*Qui Deum amat, conari non potest, ut Deus ipsum contra amet.*"

f me in philosophical thought, and even in the study of pinoza, he was able to guide and enlighten my efforts."

Although he studied Spinoza much and reverently, he never udied him systematically. The mathematical form into hich that thinker casts his granite blocks of thought, was n almost insuperable hinderance to systematic study on the art of one so impatient, so desultory, and so unmathematical s Goethe. But a study may be very fruitful which is by no eans systematic; a phrase may fructify, when falling on a roper soil. It has doubtless happened to the reader in his outh to meet with some entirely novel and profoundly ggestive idea, casually cited from an ancient author; if so, e will remember the over-mastering influence it exercised, the nging it awakened for a nearer acquaintance with that uthor. The casual citation of a passage from Spinoza made y youth restless, and to this day I remember the aspect of ie page where it appeared, and the revolution in thought hich it effected. A few ideas determined the direction of oethe's mind. Although he did not study the system of pinoza with any view of adopting it as a system, he studied to draw therefrom food which his own mind could assimilate id work into new forms. Spinoza was to him what Kant as to Schiller; but, with characteristic difference, Schiller udied systematically, and tried systematically to reproduce nat he had studied.

Side by side with Spinozism, we have to note his struggles gain clearness respecting Christianity. The influence of räulein von Klettenberg attracted him to the Moravians, who emed to realise early Christianity; with his usual impression- ility he studied their history and their doctrines, and gave em some hopes that he would become a convert; but his thusiasm cooled down when he discovered the wide chasm at separated him from them. "That which separated me om this brotherhood," he says, "as well as from many other orthy Christians, was the very point which has more than ace torn the Church with dissent. One party maintained at by the Fall, human nature had been so corrupted to its most core, that not a trace of good could be found in it, d that, therefore, man must renounce all trust in his own wers, and look only to the effect of grace. The opposite rty, admitting the hereditary imperfections of man, ascribed nature a certain internal germ of good which, animated by vine grace, was capable of growing up into a joyous tree of

spiritual happiness. This latter conviction penetrated to th depths of my soul all the time that I was, with tongue an pen, maintaining the opposite doctrine. But I had so dawdle along without thinking (*ich dämmerte so hin*) that I had neve clearly stated the dilemma to myself."

In spite of all his differences, however, with this sect c that sect, nothing, as he says, could rob him of his love fc the Holy Scriptures and for the Founder of Christianity. H therefore wrought out for his own private use a Christianity c his own; and as everything which took possession of his sou always assumed a poetic form, he now conceived the idea c treating epically the history of the *Wandering Jew*. "Th legend ran that in Jerusalem there was a shoemaker name Ahazuerus. The shoemaker whom I had known in Dresden supplied me with the main features of his character; and animated them with the spirit and humour of an artisan c the school of Hans Sachs, ennobling him by a great love fo Christ. In his open workshop he talked with the passers-by and jested with them after the Socratic fashion; so that th people took pleasure in lingering at his booth. Even th Pharisees and Sadducees spoke to him; and our Saviou himself, and his disciples, often stopped before his door The shoemaker, whose thoughts were altogether worldly, nevertheless depicted as feeling a special affection for ou Lord, which chiefly showed itself in a desire to convert thi great man, whose mind he did not comprehend, to his own way of thinking. He therefore gravely incited Christ t abandon contemplation, to cease wandering through th country with such idlers, and drawing the people away fron their work into the desert; because an assembled multitude he said, was always excitable, and no good could come c such a life. Our Lord endeavoured by parables to instruc him in his higher views, but they were all thrown away on th rough shoemaker. As Christ grew into greater importance and became a public character, the well-meaning workma pronounced his opinion still more sharply and angrily, decla ing that nothing but disorder and tumult could result fro such proceedings, and that Christ would at length be com pelled to place himself at the head of a party, which certainl was not his design. And now when these consequences ha ensued, Christ having been seized and condemned, Ahazuer gives full vent to his indignation, as Judas, who in appearanc had betrayed our Lord, enters the workshop in despair, wit

oud lamentations, telling of the frustration of his plan. He ad been, no less than the shrewdest of the other disciples, oroughly persuaded that Christ would declare himself Regent nd Chief of the people, and thought by this violence to ompel him, whose hesitation had hitherto been invincible, o hasten the declaration.[1] In this persuasion he had roused ie priesthood to an act from which they had hitherto shrunk. he disciples, on their side, were not unarmed; and probably l would have gone well, had not our Lord given himself up, nd left them in the most helpless condition. Ahazuerus, by o means propitiated by this narrative, embitters the state f the wretched ex-apostle, who has no resource left but to ang himself. As our Saviour is led past the workshop of ie shoemaker, on his road to execution, the well-known ene of the legend occurs. The sufferer faints under the urden of the cross, which Simon of Cyrene undertakes to arry. At this moment Ahazuerus steps forward; and, in the yle of those harsh common-sense people who, seeing a man iserable through his own fault, feel no compassion, but ther, in their ill-timed justice, make the matter worse by eproaches, repeats all his former warnings, which he now rns into vehement accusations, springing, as it were, from s very love for the sufferer. Our Saviour answers not, but that instant Veronica covers his face with a napkin, and ere, as she removes it and raises it aloft, Ahazuerus sees epicted the features of our Lord, not in their present agony, it radiant with celestial life. Astounded at the sight, he rns away his eyes, and hears the words, 'Over the earth shalt ou wander till thou shalt once more see me in this form.' verwhelmed by the sentence, he is some time before he covers himself; *he then finds that every one has gone to the lace of execution, and that the streets of Jerusalem are empty.* nrest and yearnings drive him forth, and his wanderings egin."

This legendary conception he never executed. It lived ithin him for a long while, and during his travels in Italy e again thought of taking it up; but, like so many other ans, it remained a mere scheme, from the want of some xternal stimulus urging him to give it a shape.

[1] This new light thrown upon that strange history, though adverse from all adition, is in strict accordance with our knowledge of human nature. It s been adopted by Archbishop Whately, to whom, indeed, it is generally tributed; and has furnished the subject of a miracle-play to R. H. Horne. e his *Judas Iscariot.*

Another subject also worthy of elaborate treatment is thu
mentioned by him: "The common burthen of humanit
which we have all to bear falls most heavily on those whos
intellectual powers expand early. We may grow up unde
the protection of parents, we may lean for a while upon ou
brothers and friends, be amused by acquaintances, rendere
happy by those we love, but in the end man is always drive
back upon himself; and it seems as if the Divinity had s
placed himself in relation to man as not always to respon
to his reverence, trust, and love, at least not in the terrib
moment of need. Early and often enough had I learned tha
the call to us is 'Physician, heal thyself'; and how frequentl
had I been compelled to exclaim in my pain, 'I tread the win
press alone!' So now, looking round for support to my sel
dependence, I felt that the surest basis on which to build wa
my own productive activity. For many years I had neve
known it fail me. What I had seen by day often shape
itself into magnificent dreams at night. My time for writin
was early in the morning; but in the evening, or deep in th
night, when wine and social intercourse had elevated m
spirits, you might demand whatever you wanted; only let
subject with some character in it be proposed, and I was a
once prepared and ready. In reflecting on this natural gif
I saw that it belonged to me *as my own*, and could neither b
fostered nor hindered by any external circumstances; so
sought to make it the basis of my whole existence. Thi
notion transformed itself into an image. The old mythologica
figure of Prometheus occurred to me; who, severed from th
gods, peopled the world from his own workshop. I clear
felt that nothing important could be produced without sel
isolation. My productions had been the children of solitude
and since I had formed wider relations with the world the
had been no want of power or of *pleasure of invention*, bu
the *execution* halted, because I had neither in prose nor i
verse, what could properly be called a style of my own, an
thus with every new work had to begin at the beginning, an
make experiments. As in this I had to exclude all aid fro
men, so, after the fashion of Prometheus, I separated myse
from the gods also; and this the more naturally as, with m
mode of thinking, one tendency always swallowed up an
repelled every other.

"The fable of Prometheus lived within me. The old Tita
web I cut up according to my own stature, and began to wri

play expressing the incongruous relation in which Prometheus ood with respect to Jupiter and the later gods, in conse- ience of his making men with his own hand, giving them e by the aid of Minerva, and thus founding a third dynasty. o this strange composition belongs the monologue which as become famous in German literature, because it called rth a declaration from Lessing against Jacobi on certain portant matters of doctrine."[1]

Of this *Prometheus* we possess but a fragment, but the agment is of such excellence as to make us regret that it ever was completed. It lies there among his works, like the rso of the Theseus, enough to prove the greatness of the tist, if not enough to satisfy the spectator. Grand in con- ption, simple in style, luminous with great thoughts, it ould have been an exemplar of the adaptation of an antique mbol to modern meanings, not the idle imitation of a bygone eed.

Nothing can be more unlike Æschylus. The Greek Titan ories in his audacity:

Ἑκὼν ἑκὼν ἥμαρτον, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι.

Willingly, willingly I did it, never will I deny the deed!" t while glorying, he *complains:* the injustice of the tyrant rings from him cries of pain, cries of physical and cries of oral agony. The whole tragedy is one wild outburst of rrow. The first words he utters fling his clamorous sorrow on e air, call on the Divine Ether and the swift winged Winds, the Sea Springs and the multitudinous laughter of the ves, on the Universal Mother, the Earth—and on the all- eing Eye, the Sun, to witness what he, a god, must suffer. hese are his opening words; the closing words carry the me burden. He wails over the pangs that are and are be:—

Αἰ, αἰ τὸ παρὸν τὸ τ' ἐπερχόμενον
Πῆμα στενάχω.

his is antique. The Titan in Goethe utters *no* complaint. here is no bravado in his defiance; the defiance is uncom- promising and sublime. His contempt for Zeus is founded

[1] He alludes to the discussion on Spinoza between Jacobi and Lessing, ich gave rise to Jacobi's book, *Ueber die Lehre des Spinozas.* This feeble k made a great noise in its day.

on his knowledge of the subordination of Zeus to a higher power—Destiny. "Away," he exclaims, "I serve no slave."

Geh! Ich diene nicht Vasallen!

In this he resembles the Titan drawn by Shelley, in the *Prometheus Unbound*, who, to Mercury's warning of the years of coming torture, calmly and grandly answers:

"Perchance no thought can count them—yet they pass!"

On this conviction rests his self-reliance. He knows the reign of tyranny must end, and he awaits that end.

In Æschylus also, the Titan knows that Zeus must fall; he foresees his own release, and, foreseeing it, resolves to bear his fate as well as he can, "for it is vain to struggle against fate" (v. 105). Nevertheless, the knowledge of an end, and the philosophy which preaches acquiescence, does not prevent him from *complaining*. And this is very Greek. Homer makes even Mars, when wounded, howl with pain; and Sophocles has filled the *Philoctetes* with cries of physical pain. The Greeks had none of our modern notions respecting the effeminacy of complaint.

It may be objected perhaps to the foregoing view of the Titan, that Æschylus has in the first scene made him impenetrably silent, disdaining to answer the taunts of Power and the pity of Vulcan, as they bind him to the rock. These draw from him no groan, no word, no gesture; he has no defiance for the one, nor friendly gratitude for the other. It is not until he is left alone that he appeals to Earth, Air, and Ocean. This silence followed by this passion, produces a sublime effect. But the sublimity was *not* the poet's intention; it is an accidental effect. The silence was simply a *stage-necessity*, as I have elsewhere shown. Whether owing to some eurhythmic tendency in the construction of Greek plays, as Gruppe,[1] and after him Bode,[2] have maintained; or, more probably from motives of economy with respect to the actors, as Geppert asserts;[3] certain it is that in the plays of Æschylus more than *two speakers* were never together on the stage, with one trivial exception in the *Choëphoræ*, where Pylades says a few words. Hence scholars have been puzzled to account for the distribution of the *Prometheus* into parts. In the first scene the

[1] *Ariadne: oder die tragische Kunst der Griechen*, p. 143.
[2] *Geschichte der Hellen, Dichtkunst*, iii. p. 233.
[3] *Alt-Griechische Bühne*, p. 58.

rotagonist would take Power and the deuteragonist Vulcan. rometheus therefore *must* be silent, for there is no one to peak for him. Here comes the difficulty: If Prometheus necessarily silent during the prologue, how does he become oquent immediately on being left alone? Welcker[1] supposes at Prometheus was represented by a picture, and the pro-gonist at the close of the prologue got behind it, and spoke rough it; an explanation accepted by Hermann,[2] but shown Schömann[3] to be full of difficulties. Let that point be ttled as it may, the fact remains that the silence of rometheus was forced by stage necessities, and was *not* eant as an indication of his self-reliance; the further proof which is to be seen in his wailings and writhings throughout e play—notably in the scene with Mercury (v. 905), where rometheus is scurrilously fluent.

Shelley never makes his Titan flinch. He stands there as e sublime of *endurance*:

> "To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
> To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
> To defy power which seems omnipotent;
> To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
> Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent."

his is grand; but grander far the conception of Goethe, hose Titan knows that he is a god, and that if he be true to mself no power can trouble or destroy his heritage of life d activity:

> Das was ich habe können sie nicht rauben,
> Und was *sie* haben mögen sie beschützen;
> Hier Mein und Dein,
> Und so sind wir geschieden.
>
> EPIMETHEUS.
>
> Wie vieles ist denn Dein?
>
> PROMETHEUS.
>
> Der Kreis den meine Wirksamkeit erfüllt.[4]

Opusc. ii. p. 146. [2] *Trilogie*, p. 30. [3] *Prometheus*, p. 85.

[4] That which I have they cannot rob me of; that which they have, let m guard. Here mine, here thine; and thus are we distinguished.

EPIMETHEUS.

What, then, is thine?

PROMETHEUS.

The circle my activity doth fill!

This is a profound truth strikingly brought out. Godlik energy is seen only in creation; what we can *do* we *are*: ou strength is measured by our plastic power. Thus the con tempt of Prometheus for the idleness, the uncreativeness o the gods is both deep and constant.

Curtain thy heavens, Zeus,
With clouds, with mist!
And, like a boy that crushes thistle-tops,
Loosen thy rage on oaks and mountain ridges.
Yet must thou leave
Me my earth standing;
My hut, which myself built;
My hearth, with its bright flame,
Which thou dost envy.
I know nought so pitiful
Under the sun as ye gods!
Scantily nourishing
With the forced offerings
Of tremulous prayer
Your divinity!
Children and beggars,
And fools hope-deluded,
Keep ye from starving!
Who gave me succour
From the fierce Titans?
Who rescued me
From slavery?
Thou, thou, my soul, glowing
With holiest fire!
Yet didst thou, credulous,
Pour forth thy thanks to him
Who slumbers above!

I reverence thee? Wherefore?
Hast lightened the woes
Of the heavily laden?
Hast *thou* dried the tears
Of the troubled in spirit?
Who fashioned me man?
Was it not almighty Time—
And Fate eternal,
Thy lords and mine?
Here I sit and shape
Man in my image:
A race like myself,
That will suffer and weep,
Will rejoice and enjoy,
And scorn thee,
As I!

Even in this rough plaster-cast of translation, does not th grandeur and beauty of the original shine through?

CHAPTER VII

LILI

I MUST tell you something which makes me happy; and that the visit of many excellent men of all grades, and from all parts, who, among unimportant and intolerable visitors, call on me often, and stay some time. We first know that we exist, when we recognise ourselves in others (*man weiss erst dass man ist, wenn man sich in andern wiederfindet*)." It is thus he writes to the Countess Augusta von Stolberg, with whom he had formed, through correspondence, one of those romantic friendships which celebrated men, some time in their lives, are generally led to form. This correspondence is among the most characteristic evidences we have of his mental condition, and should be read by every one who wishes to correct the *tone* of the Autobiography. Above all, it is the depository of his fluctuating feelings respecting Lili, the woman whom, according to his statement to Eckermann, he loved more than any other. "She was the first, and I can also add she is the last, I truly loved; for all the *inclinations* which have since agitated my heart, were superficial and trivial in comparison." [1] There is no statement he has made respecting a matter of feeling, to which one may oppose a flatter contradiction. Indeed we find it difficult to believe he uttered such a sentence, unless we remember how carelessly in conversation such retrospective statements are made, and how, at his very advanced age, the memory of youthful feelings must have come back upon him with peculiar tenderness. Whatever caused him to make that statement, the statement is very questionable. I do not think that he loved Lili more than Frederika; and we shall hereafter have positive evidence that his love for the Frau von Stein, and for his wife, was of a much deeper and more enduring nature. "My love for Lili," he said to Eckermann, "had something so peculiar and delicate that even now it has influenced my style in the narrative of that painfully-happy epoch. When you read the fourth volume of my *Autobiography*, you will see that my love was something quite different from love in novels."

[1] *Gespräche*, iii. p. 299.

Well, the fourth volume is now open to every one, and h must have peculiar powers of divination who can read an profound passion in the narrative. A colder love-histor was never written by a poet. There is no emotion warmin the narrative; there is little of a loving recollection, gatherin all details into one continuous story; it is, indeed, with grea difficulty one unravels the story at all. He seems to seiz every excuse to interrupt the narrative by general reflection or by sketches of other people. He speaks of himself a "the youth of whom we now write!" He speaks of he and her circle, in the vaguest manner; and the feeling which agitated him we must "read between the lines."

It is very true, however, that the love there depicted i unlike the love depicted in novels. In novels, whateve may be the amount of foolishness with which the writer adumbrate their ideal of the passion, this truth, at least, i everywhere set forth, that to love we must render up bod and soul, heart and mind, all interests and all desires, a prudences and all ambitions, identifying our being with tha of another, in union to become elevated. To love is for th soul to choose a companion, and travel with it along th perilous defiles and winding ways of life; mutually sustain ing, when the path is terrible with dangers, mutually exhor ing, when it is rugged with obstructions, and mutuall rejoicing, when rich broad plains and sunny slopes mak the journey a delight, showing in the quiet distance th resting-place we all seek in this world.

It was not such companionship he sought with Lili; it wa not such self-devotion which made him restlessly happy i her love. This child of sixteen, in all the merciless grace o maidenhood, proudly conscious of her power, ensnared hi roving heart through the lures of passionate desire, but sh never touched his soul; as the story we have to tell wi sufficiently prove.

Anna Elizabeth Schönemann, immortalised as Lili, was th daughter of a great banker in Frankfurt, who lived in th splendid style of merchant princes. She was sixteen whe Goethe first fell in love with her. The age is significan It was somewhat the age of Frederika, Lotte, Antoinett and Maximiliane. An age when girlhood has charms o grace and person, of beauty and freshness, which even thos will not deny who profoundly feel the superiority of developed woman. There is poetry in this age; but the

no depth, no fulness of character. Imagine the wide-veeping mind of the author of *Götz*, *Faust*, *Prometheus*, *The Vandering Jew*, *Mahomet*, in companionship with the mind a girl of sixteen!

Nor was Lili an exceptional character. Young, graceful, id charming, she was confessedly a coquette. Early in eir acquaintance, in one of those pleasant hours of over-wing egotism wherein lovers take pride in the confession faults (not without intimation also of nobler qualities), li told him the story of her life; told him what a flirt she d been; told him, moreover, that she had tried her spells him, and was punished by being herself ensnared. Armida und herself spell-bound by Rinaldo; but this Rinaldo followed r into the enchanted gardens more out of adventurous riosity than love.

There was considerable difference in their stations; and the egant society of the banker's house was every way discordant the wild youth, whose thoughts were of Nature, and un-nstrained freedom. The balls and concerts to which he llowed her were little to his taste. "If," he writes to ugusta von Stolberg, "If you can imagine a Goethe in aided coat, from head to foot in the gallantest costume, nid the glare of chandeliers, fastened to the card table by pair of bright eyes, surrounded by all sorts of people, driven endless dissipation from concert to ball, and with frivolous terest making love to a pretty blonde, then will you have a cture of the present Carnival-Goethe." In the following em he expresses Lili's fascination and his uneasiness; the nslation aims at accuracy of meaning rather than poetry, cause the meaning is here the motive for my citing the em:

Wherefore so resistlessly dost draw me
Into scenes so bright?
Had I not enough to soothe and charm me
In the lonely night?

Homely in my little room secluded,
While the moon's bright beams
In a shimmering light fell softly on me,
As I lay in dreams.

Dreaming thro' the golden hours of rapture
Soothed my heart to rest,
As I felt thy image sweetly living
Deep within my breast.

Can it be I sit at yonder table,
Gay with cards and lights,
Forced to meet intolerable people,
Because 'tis *she* invites?

Alas! the gentle bloom of spring no longer
Cheereth my poor heart,
There is only spring, and love, and nature,
Angel, where thou art!

The real Goethe is thus drawn in contrast by himself in hi letter to Augusta. "But there is another, who in grey beave coat, with boots, and a brown silk neckerchief, who, ever livin in himself, working and striving, now throwing the innocen feelings of youth into little poems, now the strong spices o life into dramas, sketching his friends in chalk, asking neithe right nor left what will be thought of his doings, because h always rises through work a step higher, because he springs a no ideal, but lets his nature develop itself fighting and play ing." Here the true chord vibrates. Born for poetry, and no to pass his life in ball-rooms dangling after a pretty blondi who coquetted with him and with others, he feels that hi passion is a folly. Now when a man feels that—"Cupi may have tapped him on the shoulder, but I warrant hin heart whole." Read this poem, and read in it the struggle

Heart, my heart, what is this feeling,
That doth weigh on thee so sore?
What new life art thou revealing,
That I know myself no more?
Gone is all that once was dearest,
Gone the care that once was nearest,
Gone the labour, gone the bliss,
Ah! whence comes such change as this?
Art thou spell-bound by the beauty
Of a sweetly blooming face;
Beauteous shape, and look so truthful,
And an all-resistless grace?
When the bonds I strive to sever,
Man myself to flee for ever,
Vain are all my efforts, vain!
And but lead me back again.

With such magic-web she binds me,
To burst through I have no skill;
All-absorbing passion blinds me,
Paralyses my poor will.
In her charmed sphere delaying,
I must live, her will obeying:
Great, oh! great to me the change!
Love, oh! free me! let me range![1]

[1] No one can be more sensible than I am of the inadequacy of this transl tion, but the English reader would rather have a poor translation than a original he could not understand; and the German reader has only to turn t the original, if it does not linger in his memory.

Lili coquetted, and her coquetry seems to have cooled his ssion for a while, though she knew how to rekindle it. She rved him as he served poor Käthchen, in Leipsic; and as in eipsic he dramatised his experience under the form of *Die aune des Verliebten*, so here he dramatises the new experience an opera, *Erwin und Elmire*, wherein the coquetry of a istress brings a lover to despair—a warning to Lili, which es not seem to have been altogether without effect.

Not only had he to suffer from her thoughtlessness, but also m the thoughtfulness of parents on both sides. It was not marriage acceptable to either house. The banker's daughter, was thought, should marry into some rich or noble family. poet, who belonged to a well-to-do yet comparatively unportant family, was not exactly the bridegroom most desired. the other hand, the proud, stiff old Rath did not greatly oice in the prospect of having a fine lady for his daughter-law. Cornelia, who knew her father, and knew his pedantic ys, wrote strongly against the marriage. Merck, Crespel, rn, and other friends, were all decidedly opposed to so compatible a match. But of course the lovers were only own closer together by these attempts to separate them.

A certain Demoiselle Delf managed to overcome objections, d gain the consent of both families. "How she commenced how she got over the difficulties I know not, but one evening e came to us bringing the consent. 'Take each other's nds,' she cried in a half pathetic, half imperious manner: I vanced to Lili and held out my hand: in it she placed s, not indeed reluctantly, yet slowly. With a deep sigh we k into each other's arms greatly agitated." No formal rothal seems to have taken place. Indeed, the consent ich was obtained seems in nowise to have altered the feeling friends and relatives. The nearer marriage seemed, the re impracticable it appeared. To Goethe, after the first sh of joy had subsided, the idea of marriage was in itself ough to make him uneasy, and to sharpen his sense of the *parity* in station. The arrival of the two Counts Stolberg, l their proposal that he should accompany them in a tour ough Switzerland, gave an excuse for freeing himself from li, "as an experiment to try whether he could renounce ."

Before accompanying him on his journey, it is necessary cast a retrospective glance at some biographical details, itted while the story of Lili was narrated. The mornings

were devoted to poetry, the middle of the day to jurispru ence. Poetry was the breathing-room of his heart. In it sought to escape from the burden of intolerable doubts. " I did not write dramas I should be lost," he tells Augusta v Stolberg. Among these dramas we must place *Stella*, which, as we learn from a letter to Merck, the publish offered twenty dollars,—that is to say, three pounds sterlin What an insight this gives into the state of Literature; t author of two immensely popular works is offered three poun for a drama in five acts! Poor Schiller, subsequently, w glad to write histories and translate memoirs for fifteen eighteen shillings a sheet of sixteen pages.

In *Stella* I can trace no biographical element, and perha the absence of this element makes the weakness of the dra A poorer production was never owned by a great poe although there have not been wanting critics to see in th also the broad handling of a master. It is the old sto of the Count von Gleichen and his two wives. Fernando h deserted his wife, and formed an attachment to Stella; b the peculiarity of the situation is, that he quitted Cecilia, wife, from no assignable cause, without even having outliv his love for her. He has indeed every reason to respect a cherish her as the mother of his child, and as a high-principle virtuous woman; but he flies from her like a coward, flies one more passionate, because she gives him the transports passion in exchange for his wife's calm affection. The t women meet, and discover their love for the same man.

Here is a fine dramatic collision. On the one side Fernan sees Duty in the shape of a noble, suffering wife, and an e gaging daughter; on the other, Passion in the shape of fascinating mistress. But with this suggestive subject Goet has done little. He shows us the contemptible weakness the wavering Fernando, but the subject he has not powerfu wrought out. As I cannot recommend any one to read t play, the two masterly touches it contains may here be cit The following is delicately observed:

> We women believe in men! *In the ardour of passion they deceive th selves, how then can we help being deceived by them?*

This also is charming: Ferdinand returns to Stella afte long absence, and in their endearments she says:

> *Stella.* How we love you! We do not think of the grief you cause us *Fernando* (*stroking her hair*). And has the grief made your hair grey?

fortunate your hair is so golden . . . nay, none seems to have fallen out! *akes the comb from her hair, which falls on her shoulders. He then twines hair round his arm, exclaiming:*) Rinaldo once more in the ancient ains!

Artists complain of the dearth of subjects; will no one try s hand at that? Originally the dénouement of this "Play for vers" (as it was called) solved the difficulty by a romantic ece of bigamy. Fernando is about to fly with Cecilia—about return to his duty, when his wife—compassionating the uation of Stella, if Fernando should leave her—resolves to crifice her conjugal claims, and to *share* him with Stella! ne curtain falls as he embraces them both, exclaiming, "Mine! ne!"

This roused vehement opposition. It was said to be a plea favour of bigamy. The public dimly felt that instead of ing a proper solution of the problem, it was on the whole her ridiculous. Still more unsatisfactory however, if deeply nsidered, is the dénouement which was added when the play s produced at Weimar, and which now takes the place of e original in his collected works. Therein Fernando, unable quit Stella, and unable to quit his wife, weeps with both, d blows his brains out. This is an *evasion* of the difficulty, t a solution.

In 1798, a feeble translation of *Stella* was published in gland, and suggested to Canning his admirable caricature, *e Rovers*, familiar to all readers of the *Antijacobin*. Among ludicrous passages of this parody is the famous vow of ndship:

Matilda. A sudden thought strikes me. Let us swear an eternal ndship.
Cecilia. Let us agree to live together."

But this is really a very slight variation from the original:

tella. Madame! Da fährt mir ein Gedanke durch den Kopf—Wir en einander das seyn, was sie uns hätten werden sollen! Wir wollen ammen bleiben!—Ihre hand!—Von diesen Augenblick an, lass' ich Sie t!

Besides *Stella*, he seemed to have worked at *Faust*, and have written the opera of *Claudine von Villa Bella*, several sages for Lavater's *Physiognomy*, and many smaller poems. The Stolbergs, with whom the Swiss journey was made, e two ardent admirers of Klopstock, and two specimens of defiant "genius" class which scorned convention. They

hated imaginary tyrants; outraged sober citizens by their reck less recurrence to a supposed state of nature; and astonished sensible citizens by their exaggerated notions of friendship. Merck was pitiless in his sarcasms and warnings. He could not tolerate the idea of Goethe's travelling with these *Burschen*. But Goethe had too much of kindred devilry in him, breaking out at moments, to object to the wildness of companions, though he began to suspect all was not right when, after violating every other *convenance*, they insisted on bathing in public. Nature having nothing to say against naked youth in the bright sunshine, what business had old Humdrum to cover its eyes with modest hands, and pretend to be shocked. However, so little prepossessed was Humdrum in favour of the Nude, that stones were showered upon these children of Nature; a criticism which effectively modified their practice if it failed to alter their views.

Drinking the health of Stolberg's mistress, and then dashing the glasses against the wall to prevent their being desecrated by other lips after so solemn a consecration (a process which looked less heroic when *item'd* in the bill next day), and otherwise demeaning themselves like true children of "genius" they passed a wild and merry time. This journey need no longer detain us. Two visits alone deserve mention. One was to Karl August, who was then in Karlsruhe arranging his marriage with the Princess Luise, and who very pressingly invited the poet to Weimar. The other was to his sister Cornelia, who earnestly set before him all the objections to a marriage with Lili. "I made no promises," he says, "although forced to confess that she had convinced me. I left her with that strange feeling in my heart with which passion nourishes itself; for the boy Cupid clings obstinately to the garment of Hope even when she is preparing with long strides to depart." The image of Lili haunted him amid the lovely scenes of Nature:

> Dearest Lili, if I did not love thee
> How entrancing were a scene like this!
> Yet, my Lili, if I did not love thee,
> What were any bliss?

It was her image which endeared him to his native land. His father, always desirous he should see Italy, was now doubly anxious he should go there, as the surest means of a separation from Lili. But "Lombardy and Italy," says the poet, "lay before me a strange land; while the de-

ome of Germany lay behind, full of sweet domesticities, and here—let me confess it—*she* lived who so long had enchained e, in whom my existence was centred. A little golden heart, hich in my happiest hours I had received from her, still ing round my neck. I drew it forth and covered it with sses."

On his return to Frankfurt he learned that Lili's friends d taken advantage of his absence, to try and bring about separation, arguing, not without justice, that his absence as a proof of lukewarmness. But Lili remained firm; and was said that she had declared herself willing to go with m to America. A sentence from the *Autobiography* is worth oting, as a specimen of that love "so unlike the love to be und in novels," which he declared had given a peculiar ne to his narrative. It is in reference to this willingness Lili to go to America: "the very thing which should have imated my hopes depressed them. My fair paternal house, ly a few hundred paces from hers, was after all more endur- le and attractive than a remote, hazardous spot beyond the as!" A sentence which recalls Gibbon's antithesis, on his signation of his early love: "I sighed as a lover, I obeyed a son."

He was restless and unhappy during these months, for he as not strong enough to give up Lili, nor sufficiently in love marry her; jealous of those who surrounded her, hurt by r coldness, he was every now and then led captive by her nderness. There were moments when bygone days seemed ce more restored, and then instantly vanished again. His em of *Lili's Menagerie* expresses his surly disgust at the miliar faces which surround her. The Bear of the menagerie a portrait of himself.

Turning to Art for consolation, he began the tragedy of *gmont*, which he completed many years afterwards in Italy. was a work which demanded more repose than could be und in his present condition, and I hasten to the dénoue- ent of an episode, which, amid fluctuations of feeling, steadily vanced to an end that must have been foreseen. The be- thal was cancelled. He was once more free. Free, but t happy. His heart still yearned for her, rather because ere lay in his nature a need of loving, than because she was e woman fitted to share his life. He lingered about the use o' nights, wrapped in his mantle, satisfied if he could ch a glimpse of her shadow on the blind, as she moved

about the room. One night he heard her singing at the piano. His pulses throbbed, as he distinguished his own song :—

> Wherefore so resistlessly dost draw me
> Into scenes so bright?—

the song he had written in the morning of their happiness! Her voice ceased. She rose, and walked up and down the room, little dreaming that her lover was beneath her window.

To give decision to his wavering feelings, there came, most opportunely, a visitor to Frankfurt. This was in September. Karl August, with his bride, on his way to Weimar, once more pressed him to spend a few weeks at his court. The rapid inclination which had sprung up between the Prince and the Poet—the desire to see something of the great world—the desire, moreover, to quit Frankfurt, all combined to make him eagerly accept the invitation. His father, indeed, tried to dissuade him; partly because he did not like the intercourse of plain citizens with princes; partly because the recent experience of Voltaire with Frederick the Great seemed to point to an inevitable termination in disgrace, if not evaded by servility. His consent was extorted at last, however, and Goethe quitted for ever the paternal roof.

BOOK THE FOURTH

1775 TO 1779

"Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes?
Quem sese ore ferens! quam forti pectore et armis!
Credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse Deorum."
—*Virgil.*

"Tolle Zeiten hab' ich erlebt und hab' nicht ermangelt,
Selbst auch thöricht zu sein wie es die Zeit mir gebot."

CHAPTER I

WEIMAR IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

N the 7th of November 1775, Goethe, aged twenty-six, rived at the little city on the banks of the Ilm, where his ng residence was to confer on an insignificant Duchy the mmortal renown of a German Athens.

Small indeed is the space occupied on the map by the uchy of Saxe-Weimar; yet the historian of the German urts declares, and truly, that after Berlin there is no urt of which the nation is so proud.[1] Frederick the reat and Wolfgang Goethe have raised these courts into ntres of undying interest. Of Weimar it is necessary we ould form a distinct idea, if we would understand the tward life of the poet.

Klein ist unter den Fürsten Germaniens freilich der meine,
Kurz und schmal ist sein Land, mässig nur was er vermag.

Small among German princes is mine, poor and narrow his ngdom, limited his power of doing good." Thus sings oethe in that poem, so honourable to both, wherein he knowledges his debt to Karl August. The geographical portance of Weimar was, and is, small; but we in England ve proud reason to know how great a place in the world n be filled by a nation whose place is trivial on the map.

[1] VEHSE: *Geschichte der Deutschen Höfe seit der Reformation*, vol. xxviii. 3.

We know, moreover, that the Athens, which it is the pridi of Weimar to claim as a patronymic, was but a dot upo the surface of Europe, a dot of earth, feeding some twent thousand freemen, who not only extended the empire o their arms from Eubœa to the Thracian Bosphorus, bu who left their glories in Literature, Philosophy, and Ar as marvels and as models for the civilised world. It is inter esting therefore to know how small this Duchy of Saxe Weimar was, that we may appreciate the influence exercise by means so circumscribed. We must know how absurdl scant the income of its generous prince, who, as I am credibl informed, would occasionally supply the deficiencies of hi purse by the princely unprinceliness of selling to the Jew a diamond ring, or ancestral snuff-box, that he might han the proceeds to some struggling artist or poet. I mentio this lest it should be supposed that a sarcastic spirit ha dictated the enumeration of unimposing details, in the follow ing attempt to reconstruct some image of Weimar and it court.

Weimar is an ancient city on the Ilm, a small stream risin in the Thuringian forests, and losing itself in the Saal, a Jena; this stream on which the sole navigation seems t be that of ducks, meanders peacefully through pleasant valley except during the rainy season, when mountain-torrents swe its current, and overflow its banks. The Trent, betwee Trentham and Stafford—"the smug and silver Trent" a Shakspeare calls it—will give an idea of this stream. Th town is charmingly placed in the Ilm valley, and stands som eight hundred feet above the level of the sea. "Weimar, says the old topographer, Mathew Merian, "is *Weinma* because it was the wine market for Jena and its environ Others say it was because some one here in ancient day began to plant the vine, who was hence called *Weinmaye* But of this each reader may believe just what he pleases."[1]

On a first acquaintance, Weimar seems more like a villag bordering a park, than a capital with a court, having a courtly environments. It is so quiet, so simple; and althoug ancient in its architecture, has none of the picturesquene which delights the eye in most old German cities. Th stone-coloured, light-brown, and apple-green houses ha high-peaked slanting roofs, but no quaint gables, no capric

[1] *Topographia Superioris Saxoniæ Thuringiæ*, &c., 1650, p. 188.

architectural fancy, none of the mingling of varied styles hich elsewhere charms the traveller. One learns to love its iiet simple streets, and pleasant paths, fit theatre for the mple actors moving across the scene; but one must live ere some time to discover its charm. The aspect it presented, when Goethe arrived, was of course very different om that presented now; but by diligent inquiry we may t some rough image of the place restored. First be it oted that the city walls were still erect; gates and portcullis ill spoke of days of warfare. Within these walls were six seven hundred houses, not more, most of them very cient. Under these roofs were about seven thousand inbitants—for the most part not handsome. The city gates ere strictly guarded. No one could pass through them in rt or carriage without leaving his name in the sentinel's ook; even Goethe, minister and favourite, could not escape is tiresome formality, as we gather from one of his letters the Frau von Stein, directing her to go out alone, and eet him beyond the gates, lest their exit together should known. During Sunday service a chain was thrown across e streets leading to the church, to bar out all passengers, practice to this day partially retained: the chain is fastened, t the passengers step over it without ceremony. There was tle safety at night in those silent streets; for if you were no great danger from marauders, you were in constant nger of breaking a limb in some hole or other; the idea lighting streets not having presented itself to the Thuringian nd. In the year 1685, the streets of London were first hted with lamps; in 1775 Germany had not yet ventured that experiment. If in 1854 Weimar is still innocent of s, and perplexes its inhabitants with the dim obscurity of an casional oil-lamp slung on a cord across the streets, we can derstand that in 1775 it had not even advanced so far. id our supposition is exact.[1]

The palace, which now forms three sides of a quadrangle, d is truly palatial in appearance, was in ashes when Goethe rived. The ducal pair inhabited the Fürstenhaus, which nds opposite. The park was not in existence. In its place

[1] In a decree made at Cassel, in 1775, this sentence is noticeable: "In ry house as soon as the alarum sounds at night, every inhabitant must hold a lighted lantern, in order that the people may find their way in the eets." Quoted by BIEDERMANN: *Deutschland in 18ten Jahrhundert*, i. p. .

there was the *Welsche Garten*, a garden arranged after th pattern of Versailles, with trees trimmed into set shapes, wit square beds, canals, bridges, and a Babylonic spiral tow called *Die Schnecke*, in which the people assembled to he music, and to enjoy punch and sweet cakes. To the left this garden stood the nucleus of the present park, and wooded mass stretching as far as Upper Weimar.

Saxe-Weimar has no trade, no manufactures, no animatio of commercial, political, or even theological activity. Th part of Saxony, be it remembered, was the home and shelt of Protestantism in its birth. Only a few miles from Weim stands the Wartburg, where Luther, in the disguise of Squi George, lived in safety, translating the Bible, and hurling h inkstand at the head of Satan, like a roughhanded disputa as he was. In the market-place of Weimar stand, to this da two houses from the windows of which Tetzel advertised h indulgences, and Luther afterwards in fiery indignation fu minated against them. These records of religious strugg still remain, but are no longer suggestions for the continuanc of the strife. The fire is burnt out; and perhaps in no ci of Europe is theology so placid, so entirely at rest. Th Wartburg still rears its picturesque eminence over the love Thuringian valleys; and Luther's room is visited by thousand of pilgrims; but in this very palace of the Wartburg, besid the room where Luther struggled with Satan, the visitors a shown the Banqueting Hall of the Minnesingers, where po challenged poet, and the *Sängerkrieg*, or Minstrels' Contes was celebrated. The contrast may be carried further. may be taken as a symbol of the intellectual condition Saxe-Weimar, that while the *relics* of Luther are simply pr served, the Minstrel Hall is now being restored in more tha its pristine splendour. Lutheran theology is crumbling awa just as the famous *inkspot* has disappeared beneath the gradu scrapings of visitors' penknives; but the minstrelsy of whi the Germans are so proud, daily receives fresh honour a adulation. Nor is this adulation a mere revival. Every ye the Wartburg saw assembled the members of that numero family (the Bachs) which, driven from Hungary in the ea period of Reform, had settled in Saxony, and had given, besid the great John Sebastian Bach, many noble musicians to t world. Too numerous to gain a livelihood in one city, t Bachs agreed to meet every year at the Wartburg. Th custom, which was continued till the close of the eighteen

ntury, not only presented the singular spectacle of one family onsisting of no less than a hundred and twenty musicians, ut was also the occasion of musical entertainments such as ere never heard before. They began by religious hymns, ng in chorus; they then took for their theme some popular ng, comic or licentious, varying it by the improvisations of ur, five, or six parts; these improvisations were named *uolibets*, and are considered by many writers to have been e origin of German opera.

The theologic fire has long burnt itself out in Thuringia. Weimar, where Luther preached, another preacher came, nom we know as Goethe. In the old church there is one ortrait of Luther, painted by his friend Lucas Kranach, eatly prized, as well it may be; but for this one portrait of uther, there are a hundred of Goethe. It is not Luther, ut Goethe, they think of here; poetry, not theology, is the ory of Weimar. And, corresponding with this, we find the ominant characteristic of the place to be no magnificent urch, no picturesque ancient buildings, no visible image of e earlier ages, but the sweet serenity of a lovely park. The rk fills the foreground of the picture, and always rises first the memory. Any one who has spent happy hours wander- g through its sunny walks and winding shades, watching its auties changing through the fulness of summer, and the iking contrasts of autumn as it deepens into winter, will sily understand how Goethe could have been content to e in so small a city, which had, besides its nest of friends, charming a park. It was indeed mainly his own creation; d as it filled a large space in his life, it demands more than passing allusion here.

Southwards from the palace it begins, with no obstacle of ll or iron gate, servant or sentinel, to *seem* to shut us out, let us enter and look round. In the dew of morning, and the silence of moonlight, we may wander undisturbed as if our own grounds. The land stretches for miles away with- t barrier; park and yellow cornlands forming one friendly panse. If we pass into it from the palace gates, a winding th to the right conducts us into the Belvedere Allée: a gnificent avenue of chestnut trees, two miles long, stretching m the new street to the summer palace of Belvedere. This ords a shaded promenade along the park, in summer grateful its coolness, in autumn looking like an avenue of golden es. It terminates in the gardens of the Belvedere, which

has its park also beautifully disposed. Here the Weimarian resort, to enjoy the fresh air after their fashion, namely, wi accompaniments of bad beer, questionable coffee, and detes able tobacco.

If, instead of turning into the Belvedere Allée, we ke within the park, our walks are so numerous that choice becom perplexing. Let us cross the *Stern Brücke*, a bridge leadi from the palace. Turning to our right we pass along throug noble trees, charmed by

> "The sound of a hidden brook
> In the leafy month of June,
> Which to the quiet trees all night
> Singeth a quiet tune."

We reach the broad road leading to Upper Weimar. On th road, which skirts a meadow washed by the Ilm, we shall pa Goethe's *Gartenhaus* (Garden House, to be described her after), and then winding round the meadow, cross anoth bridge, and enter a shadowy path, picturesque with well-group trees—the solemn pine, the beech, whose dark green patch of moss increase the brilliancy of its silver bark, the weepi birch with its airy elegance of form, the plane tree, the el the chestnut and the mountain ash, brilliant with berries han ing like clusters of coral against the deep blue of the sky. O steep side of this path is craggy with masses of moss-cover rock; beneath the other flows the Ilm. A few paces from t bridge which leads us here, stands the *Borkenhaus* (Ba House), a hermit's hut, erected by Goethe for a fête of t duchess, and subsequently the favourite residence of the duk It is only twenty feet long and fourteen deep, built entirely wood, and plastered (so to speak) with the bark of trees. rests against a rock amid the trees, and is surrounded by wooden gallery, reached by rough wooden steps. Where the prince who would live in such a hut nowadays? Whe are the ministers who would attend council in such a hut? Y here Karl August lived alone, glad to escape from the tediu of etiquette, and the palling pleasures of a little court. He he debated affairs of state, not less momentous to him becau they were trivial in European politics. Here he bathed in t Ilm running beneath. Here he could see the Garden Hou of his poet, and telegraph to him across the Park. In th single room, which was at once dining-room, council-chamb study, and bedroom, the manly duke lived alone for months

From the *Borkenhaus* a small flight of stone steps conducts to a mimic Ruin, and thence a narrow winding path leads a stone monument, interesting as a witness to the growth of mythos. It is an antique column, four feet high, round which a serpent winds, in the act of devouring the offering kes on the top. The inscription says, *Genio Loci*. But the eimer *plebs*, disregarding antique symbols, and imperfectly quainted with Virgil, has a legend to tell; a legend sprung, one knows whence, rapid and mysterious as the growth of ngi, like most legends, to satisfy the imperious craving for *planations;* a legend which certifies how, formerly, a huge pent dwelt in this spot, the terror of Weimar, until a cunning ker bethought him of placing poisoned cakes within the nster's reach; and when the greedy ignorance of the serpent d relieved Weimar of the monster, a grateful people erected s monument to an energetic and inventive baker. *Et voilà, mme on écrit l'histoire.*

I will not fatigue the reader by dragging him all over this ich loved park, which must be enjoyed directly, not through scription;[1] enough for present purposes if it be added that ile the summer palace of Belvedere is connected with eimar by the chestnut avenue, the summer palace and park Tiefurt is also connected with Weimar by a richly-wooded ad, the Webicht. This Tiefurt is a tiny little place, quite a riosity of diminutiveness. The park, through which runs a anch of the Ilm, is tiny but picturesque. The upper story the palace is a labyrinth of tiny rooms, some of them so all that, standing with your back against one wall, you can ich the opposite wall with your hand. It was here the uchess Amalia lived.

"I have lived here fifty years," said Goethe to Eckermann, nd where have I not been? but I was always glad to return Weimar." The stranger may wonder wherein lies the arm; but a residence at Weimar soon reveals the secret. nong the charms are the environs. First there is Etters-rg, with its palace, woods, and park, some seven miles tant. Then there is Bercka with its charming valley, dear all pedestrians, within half-a-dozen miles; a little farther is na and its enchanting valley, from whose heights we look wn on the sombre city, rendered illustrious by so many

[1] If a fuller description be desired, the reader will find one in the charming es of Stahr's *Weimar und Jena*, to which I take this occasion of acknowging a large debt.

sounding names. Jena was to science what Weimar was t poetry. Assembled there were men like Griesbach, Paulu Baumgarten-Crusius, and Danz, to teach theology; Schelling Fichte, Hegel, Reinhold, and Fries to teach philosophy Loder, Hufeland, Oken, Döbereiner, to teach science; Luden Schultz, and others, for history. The Schlegels and the Hum boldts also lent their lustre to the place. Besides Jena, w must mention Ilmenau, Eisenach, the Thuringian forests, an the valley of the Saal: environs attractive enough for the mos restless wanderer.

Having thus sketched the main features of the *place*, it wi now be desirable to give some indication of the *times*, that w may understand the atmosphere in which Goethe lived. Diffi cult as the restoration of Weimar has been to me, and onl possible through the aid of what still remains from the ol time, the difficulty has been tenfold with regard to the mor changing aspects of society and opinion. Curiously enoug the Germans, famous for writing on all subjects, have pro duced no work on the state of manners and the domesti conditions of this much-be-written period. The books o Goethe are endless; there is not one which tells us of th outward circumstances among which he moved. From fa and wide I have gathered together some details which ma aid in forming a picture.

Remember that we are in the middle of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution is as yet only gathering it forces together; nearly twenty years must elapse before th storm breaks. The chasm between that time and our own i vast and deep. Every detail speaks of it. To begin wit Science—everywhere the torch of civilisation—it is enough t say that Chemistry did not then exist. Abundant material indeed existed, but that which makes a Science, viz. th power of *prevision* based on *quantitative* knowledge, was sti absent; and Alchemy maintained its place among the con flicting hypotheses of the day. Goethe in Frankfurt was bus with researches after the "virgin earth." The philosopher' stone had many eager seekers. In 1787, Semler sent to th Academy of Berlin his discovery that gold grew in a certai atmospheric salt, when kept moist and warm. Klaproth, i the name of the Academy, examined this salt, and foun indeed gold leaf in it—which had been put there by Semler' servant to encourage his master's credulity. This age, so in credulous in religion, was credulous in science. In spite

the labours of the encyclopedists, in spite of all the philo-phic and religious "enlightenment," in spite of Voltaire and Mettrie, it was possible for Count St. Germain and Cagli-ro to delude thousands: and Casanova found a dupe in the rquise d'Urfé, who believed he could restore her youth, and ke the moon impregnate her! It was in 1774 that Mesmer onished Vienna with his marvels of mystic magnetism. The cret societies of Freemasons and Illuminati, mystic in their emonies and chimerical in their hopes—now in quest of the ilosopher's stone, now in quest of the perfectibility of man-nd—a mixture of religious, political, and mystical reveries, urished in all parts of Germany, and in all circles.

With Science in so imperfect a condition, we are sure to d a corresponding poverty in material comfort and luxury. gh-roads, for example, were only found in certain parts of rmany; Prussia had no chaussée till 1787. Milestones re unknown, although fingerposts existed. Instead of facili-ing the transit of travellers, it was thought good political onomy to obstruct them, for the longer they remained the re money they spent in the country. A century earlier, ge-coaches were known in England; but in Germany, public nveyances, very rude to this day in places where no railway ists, were few and miserable; nothing but open carts with stuffed seats. Diligences on springs were unknown before oo; and what they were, even twenty years ago, many aders doubtless remember. Then as to speed. In 1754 ere was "the flying coach" running from Manchester to ndon, but taking four days and a half on the journey. In 63 there was a coach between Edinburgh and London, once month; it passed twelve or fourteen days on the road; ough even in our own stage-coach days the distance was rformed in forty-eight hours. And as England was a busy tion, always in a hurry, we may gather from these details me idea of the rapidity of German travel. Germans were t flurried by agitations as to loss of time: if you travelled st, it was said with pride that seldom more than an hour's iting was necessary before the horses were got ready,—at st on frequented routes. Mail travelling was at the rate five English miles in an hour and a quarter. Letters took ne days from Berlin to Frankfurt, which in 1854 required ly twenty-four hours. So slow was the communication of ws that, as we learn from the Stein correspondence, the ath of Frederick the Great was only known in Carlsbad as

a rumour a week afterward. "By this time," writes Goeth "you must know in Weimar if it be true." With th obstacles to locomotion, it was natural that men travelled l rarely, and mostly on horseback. What the inns were may imagined from the infrequency of travellers, and the gene state of domestic comfort.

The absence of comfort and luxury (luxury as distinguish from ornament) may be gathered from the Memoirs of t time, and from such works as Bertuch's *Mode Journal*. Su necessities as good locks, doors that shut, drawers openi easily, tolerable knives, carts on springs, or beds fit for Christian of any other than the German persuasion, are s rarities in Thuringia; but in those days, when sewers w undreamed of, and a post-office was only a vision, much th we moderns consider as comfort was necessarily wanting. T furniture, even of palaces, was extremely simple. In t houses of wealthy bourgeois, chairs and tables were of comm fir; not until the close of the eighteenth century did ma gany make its appearance. Looking-glasses followed. T chairs were covered with a coarse green cloth; the tables li wise; and carpets are only now beginning to loom upon t national mind as a possible luxury. The windows were hu with woollen curtains, when the extravagance of curtains v ventured on. Easy chairs were unknown; the only a chair allowed was the so-called *Grandfather's chair*, wh was reserved for the dignity of grey hairs, or the feeblen of age.

The *salon de reception*, or drawing-room, into which great honoured visitors were shown, had of course a kind of S day splendour, not dimmed by week-day familiarity. Th hung the curtains; the walls were adorned with family p traits or some work of native talent; the tables alluring eye with china, in guise of cups, vases, impossible shephe and very allegorical dogs. Into this room the honou visitor was ushered; and there, no matter what the ho refreshment of some kind was handed. This custom—a co pound product of hospitality and bad inns—lingered u lately in England, and perhaps is still not unknown in p vincial towns.

On eating and drinking was spent the surplus now devo to finery. No one then, except gentlemen of the first wa boasted of a gold snuff-box; even a gold-headed cane an unusual elegance. The dandy contented himself wit

ter watch. The fine lady blazoned herself with a gold ch and heavy chain; but it was an heirloom! To see a dern dinner service glittering with silver, glass, and china, l to think that even the nobility in those days ate off vter, is enough to make the lapse of time very vivid to us. silver teapot and teatray were held as princely magni-nce.

The manners were rough and simple. The journeymen at the same table with their masters, and joined in the rse jokes which then passed for hilarity. Filial obedience s rigidly enforced; the stick or strap not unfrequently ing parental authority. Even the brothers exercised an ost paternal authority over their sisters. Indeed, the posi-n of women was by no means such as our women can hear with patience; not only were they kept under the paternal, rital, and fraternal yoke, but society limited their actions its prejudices still more than it does now. No woman of better class of citizens could go out alone; the servant followed her to church, to a shop, or even to the pro-nade.

The coarseness of language may be imagined from our own erature of that period. The roughness of manners is shown such a scene as that in *Wilhelm Meister*, where the *Schöne le* in her confessions (speaking of high, well-born society) rrates how, at an evening party, forfeits were introduced; e of these forfeits is, that a gentleman shall say something lant to every lady present; he whispers in the ear of a lady, o boxes his ears, and boxes it with such violence that the wder from his hair flies into a lady's eyes; when she is abled to see again, it is to see that the husband of the lady s drawn his sword, and stabbed the offender, and that a el, in the very presence of these women, is only prevented one of the combatants being dragged from the room.

The foregoing survey would be incomplete without some tice of the *prices* of things; the more so as we shall learn reafter that the pension Karl August gave Schiller was 200 lers—about £30 of our money; that the salary of Secken-rff as *Kammerherr* was only 600 thalers, or about £100; d that the salary Goethe received, as Councillor of Legation, s only 1200 thalers, about £200 per annum. It is neces-y I should indicate something like the real relation of these ns to the expense of living. We find, in Schiller's correspon-nce with Körner, that he hires a riding-horse for sixpence

a day (vol. i. p. 84), and gets a manuscript fairly copied at th rate of three halfpence a sheet of sixteen pages (vol. i. p. 92 with us the charge is twopence for every seventy-two word the whole of *Don Carlos* cost but three and sixpence for cop ing. He hires a furnished apartment, consisting of two roon and a bedroom, for two pounds twelve and sixpence a quart (Charlotte von Kalb writing to Jean Paul, November 177 says his lodgings will only cost him ten dollars, or thirty shi lings a quarter); while his male servant, who in case of nee can act as secretary, is to be had for eighteen shillings quarter (vol. i. p. 111). Reckoning up his expenses he say "Washing, servants, the barber, and such things, all pai quarterly, and none exceeding six shillings: so that, speakin in round numbers, I shall hardly need more than four hun dred and fifty dollars" (vol. ii. p. 94)—that is, about £7 a year. Even when he is married, and sees a family growin round him, he says, "With eight hundred dollars I can liv here, in Jena, charmingly—*vecht artig*" (vol. ii. p. 153).

It is evident that in Weimar they led no very sumptuou life. A small provincial town overshadowed by a court, i modes of life were the expression of this contrast. The peopl a slow, heavy, ungraceful, ignorant, but good-natured, happy honest race, feeding on black bread and sausages; risin higher, there were the cultivated classes of employés, artist and professors; and, higher still, the aristocracy. In th theatre, until 1825, the nobility alone were allowed admissio to the boxes; and when the Jena students crowded the pi elbowing out the Weimar public, that public was forced t return home, or jostle with the students for seats in pit an gallery. Even when the theatre was rebuilt, and the bou geoisie was permitted a place in the boxes, its place was o the left side of the house, the right being vigorously reserve for the *Vons*. This continued until 1848; since that year revolutions the public has had the place it can pay for.

It is quite true, the Weimar court but little corresponde with those conceptions of grandeur, magnificence, and historic or political importance, with which the name of court is usuall associated. But just as in gambling the feelings are agitate less by the greatness of the stake than by the variations fortune, so in the social gambling of court intrigue, there the same ambition and agitation, whether the green cloth be a empire or a duchy. Within its limits Saxe-Weimar displaye all that an imperial court displays in larger proportions: it ha

ministers, its army, its chamberlains, pages, and sycophants. urt favour, and disgrace, elevated and depressed, as if they d been imperial smiles, or autocratic frowns. A standing my of six hundred men, with cavalry of fifty hussars, had its ar Department, with war minister, secretary, and clerk.[1]

As the nobles formed the predominating element of Weimar, see at once how, in spite of the influence of Karl August, d the remarkable men he assembled round him, no real blic for Art could be found there. Some of the courtiers ayed more or less with Art, some had real feeling for it; but e majority set decided faces against all the *beaux esprits*. hen the Duchess Amalia travelled with Merck in 1778, eimar was loud in anticipatory grumblings: "She will ubtless bring back some *bel esprit* picked up *en route!*" s the common cry. And really when we have learned, as shall learn in a future chapter, the habits of these *beaux prits*, and their way of making life "genial," impartiality will rce us to confess that this imperfect sympathy on the part of e *Vons* was not without its reason.

Not without profound significance is this fact that in Weimar e poet found a Circle, but no Public. To welcome his oductions there were friends and admirers; there was no ation. Germany had no public; nor has it to this day. It s, and is, a collection of cities, not a Nation. To appreciate contrast the full significance of such a condition we must ok at Greece and Rome. There the history of Art tells the me story as is everywhere told by the history of human ort. It tells us that to reach the height of perfection there ust be the co-operation of the Nation with individual Genius. us it is necessary for the development of science that science ould cease to be the speculation of a few, and become the nister of the many; from the constant pressure of unsatisfied *nts*, science receives its energetic stimulus; and its highest ard is the satisfaction of those wants. In Art the same v holds. The whole Athenian Nation co-operated with its ists; and this is one cause why Athenian Art rose into surpassed splendour. Art was not the occupation of a few, nistering to the luxury of a few; it was the luxury of all. Its mphs were not hidden in galleries and museums; they blazed the noonday sun; they were admired and criticised by the

[1] Lest this should appear too ridiculous, I will add that one of the small rman princes (the Graf von Limburg Styrum) kept a corps of hussars, ch consisted of a colonel, six officers, and two privates!

whole people; and, as Aristotle expressly says, every free citize was from youth upwards a critic of Art. Sophocles wrote fo all Athens, and by all Athens was applauded. The theatr was open to all free citizens. Phidias and Praxiteles, Scopa and Myron, wrought their marvels in brass and marble, a expressions of a national faith, and the delights of a nation mind. Temples and market-places, public groves and publi walks, were the galleries wherein these sculptors placed the works. The public treasury was liberal in its rewards; and th rivalry of private munificence was not displayed to secure wor for private galleries, but to enrich the public possessions. I this spirit the citizens of Gnidos chose to continue the payme of an onerous tribute rather than suffer their statue of Venus t quit their city. And when some murmurs rose against th expense which Pericles was incurring in the building of th Parthenon, he silenced those murmurs by the threat of furnis ing the money from his private purse, and then placing h name on the majestic work.

Stahr, who has eloquently described the effects of suc national co-operation in Art, compares the similar influence publicity during the Middle Ages, when the great painters an sculptors placed their works in cathedrals,—open all day lon in council-houses and market-places, whither the peop thronged,—with the fact that in our day Art finds refuge the galleries of private persons, or in museums closed o Sundays and holidays.[1]

Nor is this all. The effect of Art upon the Nation is visib in the striking fact that in Greece and Rome the truly gre men were crowned by the public, not neglected for any arti who pandered to the fashion and the tastes of the few, or wh flattered the *first* impressions of the many. It was you Phidias whom the Athenians chose to carve the statue Pallas Athene, and to build the Parthenon. Suppose Phidi had been an Englishman, would he have been selected government to give the nation a statue of Wellington, or build the Houses of Parliament? The names most reverenc by contemporaries in Greece, and in Italy, are the names whi posterity has declared to be the highest. Necessarily so. T verdict of the public, when that public includes the whc intelligence of the nation, *must* be the correct verdict in Art

[1] See his *Torso*, pp. 147–151.

CHAPTER II

THE NOTABILITIES OF WEIMAR

HAVING endeavoured to reconstruct some image of Weimar and its people, we may now descend from generals to particulars, and sketch rapidly the principal figures which will move across that scene, during the first years of Goethe's residence.

The Dowager DUCHESS AMALIA is a very interesting figure. She had the Brunswick blood, with its capriciousness, love of pleasure, and frivolity; but she had also a mind well cultivated, not poorly gifted, and ready in appreciating men of talent. Although a niece of Frederick the Great, she did not follow the princely fashion of the day, and turn her eyes away from German literature, to fix them only upon France. She chose Wieland as the tutor of her son, and made him her own dear friend. Schiller, a rash judge of persons, and not very keen in his perception of woman's character, wrote to Körner, after his first interview with the duchess: "She has made no conquest of me. I cannot like her physiognomy. Her intellect is extremely limited, nothing interests her but what is based on the sensuous: hence the taste she has, or affects to have, for music, painting, and the rest. She is a composer herself, and has set Goethe's *Erwin und Elmire* to music. She speaks little; but has, at any rate, the merit of throwing aside all the stiffness of ceremony." Schiller's verdict cannot be accepted by any one who reflects, that, besides her appreciation of men of talent, who found delight in her society, she learned Greek from Wieland, read Aristophanes, and translated Propertius, was a musical composer, a tolerable judge of art, discussed politics with the Abbé Raynal and Greek and Italian Literature with Villoison; that, moreover, with all her multifarious reading and enjoyments, she contrived to superintend the education of her sons, and manage her kingdom with unusual success. This is not to be done by an "extremely limited intellect."

The "sensuous basis" alluded to by Schiller was certainly there. One sees it in her portraits. One sees it also in the glimpses of her joyous, pleasure-loving existence. Biographers and eulogists omit such details; for in general the biographical mind moves only through periods of rhetoric, which may be

applied with equal felicity to every prince or princess of whom it is the cue to speak. But it is by such details that the image of the duchess can alone be made a *living* one. Here, for example, is a sketch of her, given by an anonymous traveller.[1] "She is small in stature, good-looking, with a very *spirituelle* physiognomy; she has the Brunswick nose, lovely hands and feet, a light yet princely gait, speaks well but rapidly, and has something amiable and fascinating in her nature. . . . This evening there was a redoute, tickets one gulden (*two francs*) each. The court arrived at eight. The duchess was magnificent, *en domino*, and brilliant with jewels. She dances well, lightly, and gracefully. The young princes, who were attired as *Zephyr* and *Amour*, also danced well. The masquerade was very full, lively, and varied. A faro table was laid out: the smallest stake being half a gulden. The duchess staked dollars and half-louis, played generously and lost. But as she was glad to dance, she did not play long. She danced with every mask who invited her, and stayed till nearly three o'clock, when almost every one had gone home." The same writer also speaks of another redoute. "The duchess appeared *en reine grecque*, a very beautiful costume, which suited her well. The ball was very brilliant; some students from Jena were there. At the last ball of the season, the duchess sent me one of her own Savoyard dresses, and I was *frisé* and dressed like a woman by the Countess von Görtz's maid. The young count was likewise dressed as a woman, and we went to court so, dined there, and drove thence to the ball, which lasted till six o'clock."

This pleasure-loving duchess, who knew so well how to manage her kingdom, cared little for the dignities of her state. According to Wieland, she lived sometimes in student fashion, especially at Belvedere, where student-songs, not always the most decorous, rang joyously through the moonlit gardens. Driving once with seven friends in a haycart from Tiefurt, and overtaken by a storm, she made no more ado but drew over her light clothing Wieland's great coat, and in *that* costume drove on.

Her letters, especially those to Goethe's mother, several of which I have seen, have great heartiness, and the most complete absence of anything like formality. In one of them, I remember, she apologises for not having written for some time

[1] Quoted from BERNOUILLI by VEHSE: *Geschichte der Deutschen Höfe*, vol. xxviii. p. 60.

ot from want of friendship, but lack of news: to show that ne has been thinking of *Frau Aja*, she sends her a pair of arters worked by herself. "*Liebe Frau Aja!*" she writes on nother occasion, "my joy at the receipt of your letter is not asily described, nor will I attempt it, for true feelings are too acred to be set down in black and white. You know, dear nother, what you are to me, and can believe how infinitely our remembrance of me has rejoiced me."[1]

Beside the figure of the Duchess Amalia, we see that of the erry little humpbacked GÖCHHAUSEN, her maid of honour, y intimates named *Thusnelda*. One sees not why this sprightly ttle *démon de bonne compagnie* should have been named after ne wife of Arminius. She was a great favourite with Amalia, ith Karl August also, who was constantly engaged in "wit ombats" with her, not always of the mildest. She animated ociety with her devices, and kept up a voluminous corre- ondence with wits and notabilities in other cities. She was ery fond of Goethe, and wrote constantly to his mother. But arl August was her darling; perhaps because he plagued her o incessantly. As a sample of the lengths to which tricks ere carried, consider the following anecdote, which I have om Frau von Goethe, who had it from her father-in-law, an ccomplice in the deed. One night as *Thusnelda* came up the airs leading to her bedroom, her candle was blown out. Not uch heeding this, she went on, reached the gallery into nich her bedroom opened, and walked on, *feeling* for the oor. There is no great difficulty in finding the door of your vn room in the dark, yet Thusnelda groped, and groped, and oped in vain: no lock met her hand, a smooth blank wall owed her hand to pass and repass over it with increasing nfusion. Where was the door? Where was she? After oping some time, her perplexity growing into undefined arm, she descended to the duchess's room; but she found at closed; the duchess was asleep; and her gentle knockings re not answered. Upstairs she went again, again to pass r hands along the wall, but still to find no door. The ght was cold, and she was half-frozen with cold and fear fore the mystery was explained: the duke and Goethe had moved her door, and built up the wall in its place.

[1] Here is another extract, which I leave in the original: "Ach Mutter, tter!—sie errathen wohl meine Gedanken! was macht der alte Vater? er te ja nicht wohl seyn. Grüssen sie ihn von mir, und das tausendmal. ben Sie wohl, beste Mutter; behalten Sie mir lieb und denken fleissig an Freundin. *Amalia.*"

WIELAND had established his paper, the *Teutsche Merkur*, which was not without its influence. When he ceased to be the prince's tutor, he remained the valued friend of the duchess. He was in all the pleasure parties. So also was EINSIEDEL, who, at first court page, became chamberlain to the Duchess Amalia in 1776. A jovial, careless epicurean; everywhere known as *l'ami*, from his good-nature and eccentricity; filling the mouth of gossip with his extravagances; poet and musician in a small way; actor and inventor of amusements, his name meets us on every page of the Weimar chronicles.

Einsiedel makes us think of CORONA SCHRÖTER, the *Hofsängerin* (singer to the court—we have no such word, because we have no such thing). Goethe had known this beautiful and accomplished creature while he was a student at Leipsic; and when, shortly after his arrival at Weimar, he made an expedition to Leipsic with the duke, he saw her there again and induced her to come to Weimar. She was the grace of their private theatricals, and the original personator of Iphigenia.

"Als eine Blume zeigt sie sich der Welt,'

says Goethe of her, in that passage wherein he has immortalised her and Mieding.[1] What a description!

She, like a flower, opens to the world.

Corona painted, sang, played, was learned in music, and declaimed with peculiar elegance,—

"The Muses lavished on her every art."

According to Karl August, she was "marble-beautiful, but marble-cold"; Goethe says of her:—

"Und hoch erstaunt, seht Ihr in ihr vereint
Ein Ideal, das Künstlern nur erscheint."[2]

There is a notion current, originating with Riemer, but shown by Schöll to be very improbable, that Goethe had a *liaison* with Corona. I not only agree with Schöll's reasoning, but can corroborate it by the testimony of the Frau von Goethe who assured me her father-in-law expressly and emphatically

[1] See the poem *Mieding's Tod*.
[2] And gently awed, you feel in her combined
What is Ideal in the artist's mind.

old her that he never had a passion for any actress. Varnhagen von Ense suspects that Corona was privately married to Einsiedel; if not, her letters, still extant although inedited, prove that they were on the footing of lovers.

Another chamberlain, poet, and musician was SECKENDORF, who translated *Werther* into French, a year after Goethe's arrival (*Les Souffrances du Jeune Werther.* Par le B. S. d. S. Erlangen, 1776); and to these gay companions must be added BODE, the translator of Smollett; BERTUCH, the treasurer and the translator of Cervantes; and MUSÆUS, a passionate lover of gardening, who gave Weimar its pleasant *Erholung*, and who might be seen daily crossing the quiet streets with a cup of coffee in one hand, his garden tools in the other, trudging along to that loved retreat. At other times he might be seen plying the ex-drummer, Rüppler, with inspiring *schnapps* to unlock the casket of his memory, wherein were stored the legends and superstitions of the peasantry which Musæus afterwards dressed up in his own style in his celebrated *Volksmärchen*. There was much humour in Musæus; he furnished his Weimar friends with many a pleasant quip and crank. Heinrich Schmidt tells the following. One day Musæus, after a long illness, came to dine with the Schmidts. Every one was amazed at his healthy aspect. He received their reiterated compliments with perfect gravity, till his wife, unable longer to contain herself, confessed that before setting out he had rouged his cheeks![1]

These are the principal figures of Amalia's court. We may now glance at the court of the reigning duke and duchess—Carl August and Luise.

Of the DUCHESS LUISE no one ever speaks but in terms of veneration. She was one of those rare beings who, through circumstances the most trying, as well as through the ordinary details of life, manifest a *noble character*. The Queen of Prussia and the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar are two of the great figures in modern German history; they both opposed the chief man of the age, Napoleon, and were both admired by him for that very opposition. Luise was of a cold temperament, somewhat rigid in her enforcement of etiquette (unlike the dowager), and wore to the last the old costume which had been the fashion in her youth; apt in the early years of her marriage to be a little querulous with her husband, but showing throughout their lives a real and noble friendship for him.

[1] SCHMIDT: *Errinerungen eines weimarischen Veteranen*, p. 21.

And he was worthy of that friendship, much as his strange, and in many respects opposite nature, may have tried her. KARL AUGUST, whom Frederick the Great pronounced, at fourteen, to be the prince, of all he had seen, who gave the greatest promise, was in truth a very mixed, but very admirable character. He can afford to be looked at more closely and familiarly than most princes. He was a man whose keen appreciation of genius not only drew the most notable men of the day to Weimar, but whose own intrinsically fine qualities *kept* them there. It is easy for a prince to assemble men of talent. It is not easy for a prince to make them remain beside him, in the full employment of their faculties, and in reasonable enjoyment of their position. Karl August was the prince who with the smallest means produced the greatest result in Germany. He was a man of restless activity. His eye was on every part of his dominions; his endeavours to improve the condition of the people were constant. The recently published correspondence shows how active were his intellectual sympathies. In his tastes no man in Germany was so simple, except his dearest friend, Goethe, with whom, indeed, he had many cardinal points in common. I remember, on first seeing their busts together, being struck with a sort of faint family resemblance between them. Karl August might have been a younger brother, considerably "animalised," but still belonging to the family. They had both, on the paternal side, Thuringian blood in their veins; and in many respects Amalia and Frau Aja were akin. But while Karl August had the active, healthy, sensuous, pleasure-loving temperament of his friend, he wanted the *tact* which never allowed Goethe, except in his wildest period, to overstep limits; he wanted the tenderness and chivalry which made the poet so uniformly acceptable to women. He was witty, but his *bon-mots* are mostly of that kind which, repeated after dinner, are not considered fit for drawing-room publication. Very characteristic is it of him, who had bestowed unusual pains in collecting a *Bibliotheca Erotica*, that when Schiller wrote the *Maid of Orleans* he fancied Schiller was going to give another version of *La Pucelle*, and abetted his mistress, the Frau von Heygendorf, in her refusal to play the part of the rehabilitated Maiden! He was rough, soldierly, brusque, and imperious. He was at home when in garrison with Prussian soldiers, but out of his element when at foreign courts, and not always at ease in his own. Goethe describes him longing for his pipe

ne court of Brunswick in 1774: "De son coté notre bon Duc ennuie terriblement, il cherche un interet, il n'y voudrait pas tre pour rien, la marche très bien mesurée de tout ce qu'on ait ici le gene, il faut qu'il renonce a sa chere pipe et une fee e pourroit lui rendre un service plus agreable qu'en changeant e palais dans une cabane de charbonnier."[1]

In a letter (unprinted), he writes to Goethe, then at Jena, aying he longs to be with him to watch sunrise and sunset, or he can't see the sunset in Gotha, hidden as it is by the rowd of courtiers, who are so *comme il faut,* and know their fish duty" with such terrible accuracy, that every evening he els inclined to give himself to the devil. His delight, when ot with soldiers, was to be with dogs, or with his poet alone their simple houses, discussing philosophy, and "talking of vely things that conquer death." He mingled freely with the eople. At Ilmenau he and Goethe put on the miners' dress, escended into the mines, and danced all night with peasant rls. Riding across country, over rock and stream, in mani- st peril of his neck; teazing the maids of honour, sometimes rrying this so far as to offend his more princely wife; wan- ering alone with his dogs, or with some joyous companion; eking excitement in wine, and in making love to pretty omen, without much respect of station; offending by s roughness and wilfulness, though never *estranging* his ends—Karl August, often grieving his admirers, was, th all his errors, a genuine and admirable character. His ellect was active, his judgment, both of men and things, und and keen. Once, when there was a discussion about ointing Fichte as professor at Jena, one of the opponents ced a work of Fichte's in the duke's hands, as sufficient of that *such* a teacher could not hold a chair. Karl gust read the book—and appointed Fichte. He had great ns; he also had the despotic will which bends circumstances ts determined issues. "He was always in progress," said ethe to Eckermann; "when anything failed, he dismissed t once from his mind. I often bothered myself how to use this or that failure; but he ignored every shortcoming the cheerfullest way, and always went forward to some- ng new."

uch was Karl August, as I conceive him from the letters he period, and from the reports of those who knew him.

[1] *Briefe an Frau von Stein*, iii. p. 85. The French is Goethe's, as also the ing and accentuation, or rather want of accentuation.

Eight years younger than Goethe, he attached himself to him as to a brother. We shall see this attachment and its reciprocal influence in the following pages; clouds sometimes gather, quarrels and dissatisfaction are not absent (from what long friendship are they absent?); but fifty years of mutual service, and mutual love, proved the genuineness of both their characters.

Among the Weimar notables, FRAU VON STEIN must always have conspicuous eminence. In a future chapter we shall learn more of her. Enough for the present to say that she was *Hofdame* (Lady of Honour) to the Duchess Amalia, and for many years passionately loved by Goethe. Beside her we may mention the COUNTESS VON WERTHER, who was to Karl August what the Baroness von Stein was to Goethe. She, as is well known, is the original of the charming Countess in *Wilhelm Meister*, and her husband was still more eccentric than the eccentric Count. It is related of him that once when the duke and some other illustrious guests were in his chateau, he collected several of his peasants, dressed them in his livery, and blacked their faces to make them pass as negroes!

To close this list we have MAJOR VON KNEBEL, the translator of Lucretius and Propertius, an honest, upright, satirical republican, the intimate friend of Karl August and Goethe, the "philanthropic Timon," as Herder called him, severe against all shams and insincerities, but loving the human nature he declaimed against. As one looks upon his rough, genial, Socratic head, one seems to hear the accents of an independent thoroughly honest nature give weight to what he says.

I have omitted HERDER. He did not come to Weimar till after Goethe, and indeed was drawn thither by Goethe, whose admiration for him, begun at Strasburg, continued unabated. The strange bitterness and love of sarcasm in Herder's nature which could not repel the young student, did not alter the affection of the man. In one of Goethe's unpublished letters to the Duchess Amalia, there is an urgent appeal on behalf of Herder, whose large family had to be supported on very straitened means; the duke had promised to provide for one of the children, and Goethe writes to Amalia, begging her to do the same for another. No answer coming to this appeal, or at any rate no prompt notice being taken, he writes again more urgently, adding, that if she does not provide for

e child, he (Goethe), out of his small income, will! And is was at a time when Herder was most bitter against Goethe. ell might Merck exclaim: "No one can withstand the disterestedness of this man!"

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST WILD WEEKS AT WEIMAR

HIS was the circle into which Goethe entered in all the lendour of youth, beauty, and fame: Youth, which, accordg to the fine conception of the Greeks, is "the herald of enus"; Beauty, which those Greeks adored as the splendour Truth; and Fame, which has at all times been a halo zzling to mortal eyes. Thus equipped for conquest, how n we wonder that he conquered? Even Amalia, angry with m for having ridiculed her darling Wieland, could not withand the magic of his presence. Her love of genius left her choice. She was fascinated by his wild ways, and by his lendid talents. One moment he startled her with a paradox, e next moment he sprang from his seat, waltzing and whirg round the room with antics which made her scream with ghter. And Wieland?—he was conquered at once. He all speak for himself, in a letter written after their first interw: "How perfectly I felt, at the first glance, he was a man er my own heart! How I loved the magnificent youth as sat beside him at table! All that I can say (after more an one crisis which I have endured) is this: since that rning my soul is as full of Goethe as a dewdrop of the rning sun. . . . I believe the Godlike creature will remain nger with us than he intended; and if Weimar *can* do anyng, his presence will accomplish it." This is very honourle to Wieland: Nestor gazes with unenvious delight upon ung Achilles. Heroic eyes are always proud to recognise roic proportions.

After Wieland and the duchess, the rest were easy to con-er. "He rose like a star in the heavens," says Knebel. Everybody worshipped him, especially the women." In the stume of his own *Werther*, which was instantly adopted by duke, he seemed the ideal of a poet. To moderns there no very sentimental suggestions in a costume which was

composed of blue coat and brass buttons, topboots, an leather breeches, the whole surmounted by powder and pig tail; but in those days this costume was the suggestion o everything tender and romantic. Werther had consecrate it.[1] The duke not only adopted it, but made all aroun him adopt it also, sometimes paying the tailor's bill himsel Wieland alone was excepted; he was too old for suc masqueradings.

Thoroughly to appreciate the effect of Goethe's influenc with women, we must remember the state of feeling an opinion at the time. Those were the days of gallantry, th days of

"Puffs, paints, and patches, powders, billets doux."

The laxity of German morals differed from the more audaciou licentiousness of France: it had sentimentalism, in lieu of gaiet and luxuriousness, for its basis. The heart of a French ma quise was lost over a supper table sparkling with champagne an *bon-mots;* the heart of a German Gräfin yielded more readil to moonlight, melancholy, and a copy of verses. Wit an audacity were the batteries for a Frenchwoman; the Germa was stormed with sonnets, and a threat of suicide. For th one, Lothario needed sprightliness and *bon ton;* for the othe turbulent disgust at all social arrangements, expressed in inte jectional rhetoric, and a deportment outrageous to all conve tions. It is needless to add that marriage was to a gre extent what Sophie Arnould with terrible wit called it—"th sacrament of adultery";; and that on the subject of the sexe the whole tone of feeling was low. Poor, simple, earne Schiller, whom no one will accuse of laxity, admired *Les Liaison Dangereuses*, and saw no reason why women should not rea it; although to our age the infamy of that book is so gre as to stamp a brand upon the society which produced an applauded it. Yet even Schiller, who admired this boo was astounded at the condition of women at Weimar. "The is hardly one of them," he writes to Körner, "who has n had a *liaison*. They are all coquettes. . . . One may ve easily fall into an 'affair of the heart,' though it will not *la* any time." It was thought, apparently, that since Eros ha wings, he must use them—and fly.

[1] It should be remembered, that in Germany, at that time, *boots* were on worn in very bad weather; and in the presence of women no one ever appear except in shoes and silk stockings.

With this tone of society we can understand how, as Goethe after-life confessed to Eckermann, the first years at Weimar ere "perplexed with love affairs." A great admirer of omen, and greatly admired by them, it was natural he should ll into their snares. Many charmers are named; among em, Fräulein von Kalb, Corona Schröter, and Kotzebue's ster, Amalia: but I am bound to say that, after the most ligent inquiry, I can find *no* reliable evidence for believing y one of those named to have been really loved by him. e must content ourselves with the fact of his having flirted nsiderably: making love to every bright pair of eyes which r a moment could make him believe what he said.[1]

For the first few months he gave himself up to the excite-ent of this new life. Among other things he introduced ating. Weimar had hitherto seen no gentleman on the ; but now, Klopstock having made skating famous by his etry, Goethe made it fashionable by his daring grace. The chess soon excelled in the art. Skating on the *Schwanseé* came "the rage." Sometimes the banks were illuminated h lamps and torches, and music and fireworks animated the ne. The duchess and ladies, masked as during carnival, re driven in sledges over the noisy ice. "We are somewhat d here," Goethe writes to Merck, "and play the devil's own me." Wieland's favourite epithet for him was *wüthig*—out-eous; and *wüthig* he was. Strange stories are told of him, w dashing across the ice, now loosening his long hair in rtuch's room, and, with locks flowing over his shoulders, irling round in mad Bacchante waltz; and finally, standing the Jena market-place with the duke, by the hour together, acking huge sledge whips for a wager. Imagine a duke d a poet thus engaged in a public market-place!

His constant companion, and in all devilries and dissipation most jovial associate, was Karl August. All ceremony s laid aside between them. They dined together, often red the same bedroom, and called each other by the therly *thou*. "Goethe will never leave this place again," tes Wieland; "K. A. can no longer swim or wade without . The court, or rather his liaison with the duke, wastes time, which is really a great pity—and yet—with so magni-nt and godlike a creature nothing is ever lost!" Weimar

[1] "Ich log und trog mich bei allen hübschen Gesichtern herum, und hatte Vortheil immer ein Augenblick zu glauben was ich sagte," he says in a r to the Frau von Stein, vol. i. p. 5.

was startled in its more respectable circles by the conduct o these two, and their associates: conduct quite in keeping with the period named "the *genial*."[1] In their orgies they drank wine out of skulls (as Byron and his friends did in their wild days), and in ordinary intercourse exhibited but a very mitigated respect for *meum* and *tuum*, borrowing handkerchiefs and waistcoats which were never returned. The favourite epithet of that day was "infinite": Genius drank infinitely, loved infinitely, and swallowed infinite sausages.

But the poet's nature soon wearies of such scenes. After some two months of dissipation, in masking, skating, hunting, drinking, and dicing, the want to be once more among simple people and lovely scenes drove him away from Weimar to Waldeck. Amid the crowded tumult of life he ever kept his soul sequestered; and from the hot air of society he broke impatiently away to the serenity of solitude. While on this journey along the pine-clad mountains, there came over him a feeling of the past, in which the image of Lili painfully reappeared.

He was called back to Weimar by the duke, impatient of his absence; and, while debating in his own mind whether he should accept a place there, or return to Frankfurt, he began to take his seat, as a guest, in the Privy Council. He had tried the court, and now he was about to try what virtue lay in government. "I am here as if at home," so runs one of his letters, "and the duke daily becomes dearer to me." Indeed his father's prognostications had failed. The connection between his son and the duke was of a totally different kind from that between Voltaire and Fritz. In secret, Voltaire despised the verses of his patron, as his patron in secret despised the weakness of Voltaire. A few unguarded expressions were enough to snap the link which bound them together; but a lifetime only deepened the regard of Goethe and Karl August. Nor must it be supposed that their friendship was merely that of boon-companions. Both had high aims and strong will. Prince Hal might recreate himself with Falstaff, Pistol, Bardolph and the rest; but while chucking Mrs. Quickly under the chin, he knew he was one day to be England's lord. Karl August and Goethe were not the men to lose themselves in the fleeting hours of dissipation; serious, steady business

[1] It is difficult to find an English word to express the German *genial*, which means pertaining to genius. The genial period was the period when every extravagance was excused on the plea of genius.

as transacted almost the moment before some escapade. In eir retreat at Ilmenau the poet writes :

> Mein Carl und ich vergessen hier
> Wie seltsam uns ein tiefes Schicksal leitet.
> Und ach ! ich fühl's, im stillen werden wir
> Zu neuen Scenen vorbereitet.

My Karl and I here forget the strange mysterious Fate which ides us; and I feel that in these quiet moments we are eparing for new scenes." Yes, they learned "in the happy esent to forecast the future."

The duke knew what he was doing when he overstepped all ecedent, and, in June 1776, elected Goethe to the post of heime Legations Rath, with a seat and voice in the Privy uncil, and a salary of 1200 thalers. In writing to Goethe's her, the duke intimated that there was absolute freedom of ving the service at will, and that indeed the appointment s a mere formality, no measure of his affection. "Goethe n have but one position—that of my friend. All others are neath him."

The post of Geheime Legations Rath at Weimar is not a y magnificent post; and the salary of 1200 thalers (about 200) seems still less magnificent when we remember that hat period the King of Prussia gave the Barberini, an Italian ncer, exactly *ten* times the sum. But, such as it was, the pointment created great noise. Weimar was thunderstruck. e favour shown to Wieland had not passed without scandal; t alarming indeed was this elevation of a Frankfurt bourgeois. poet, who had gone through none of the routine of business, ose life was anything but "respectable," to be lifted suddly over the plodding heads of legitimate aspirants! If *this* s to be, what reward could meritorious mediocrity expect? at advantage had slowly-acquired routiniary knowledge? So murmured scandalised officials and their friends. At these murmurs expressed themselves distinctly in the pe of a protest. The duke thought the act worthy of a berate justification, and with his own hand added these ds to the protocol of the acts of his ministry: "Entened persons congratulate me on possessing such a man. genius and capacity are well known. To employ a man of n a stamp in any other functions than those in which he render available the extraordinary gifts he possesses, is to se them. As to the observation that persons of merit may

think themselves unjustly passed over: I observe, in the fir place, that nobody to my knowledge, in my service, has a rig to reckon on an equal degree of favour; and I add that I w never consent to be governed by mere length of service rotation in my choice of a person whose functions place hi in such immediate relation to myself, and are so important the happiness of my people. In such a case I shall attend nothing but the degree of confidence I can repose in t person of my choice. The public opinion which perha censures the admission of Dr. Goethe to my council witho having passed through the previous steps of Amtmann, Pr fessor, Kammerath, or Regierungsrath, produces no effect my own judgment. The world forms its opinion on prejudice but I watch and work—as every man must who wishes to d his duty—not to make a noise, not to attract the applau of the world, but to justify my conduct to God and n conscience."

Assuredly we may echo M. Dumont's sentiment, that "t prince, who, at nineteen, wrote those words, was no ordina man." He had not only the eye to see greatness, he had al the strong Will to guide his conduct according to his viev untrammelled by routine and formulas. "Say what you w it is only like can recognise like, and a prince of great capac will always recognise and cherish greatness in his servants. People saw that the duke was resolved. Murmurs we silenced; or only percolated the gossip of private circl till other subjects buried them, as all gossip is buried.

The mode of life which the *genial* company led was n only the subject of gossip in Weimar, it grew and grew scandals grow, *not* losing substance on the way, and reach the ears of distant friends. Thus, only a month before t appointment, Klopstock wrote to Goethe a letter wh scandal extorted from friendship.

"HAMBURG, *8th of May* 177

"Here is a proof of my friendship, dearest Goethe! It somewhat difficult, I confess, to give it, but it must be giv Do not fancy that I wish to preach to you about your doing or that I judge harshly of you because you have other vie than mine. But your views and mine quite set aside, wh will be the inevitable consequence if your present doi

[1] Goethe in *Eckermann*, iii. p. 232.

ntinue. The duke, if he continues to drink as he does, stead of strengthening, as he says, his constitution, will in it, and will not live long. Young men of powerful nstitutions—and that the duke is not—have in this way rly perished. The Germans have hitherto, and with stice, complained that their princes would have nothing to with authors. They now gladly make an exception in our of the duke. But what a justification will not the ner princes have, if you continue your present tone? If ly that should happen which I feel will happen! The chess will perhaps still subdue her pain, for she has a ong, manly intellect. But that pain will become grief! d can *that* be so suppressed? Louisa's grief, Goethe! . . . nust add a word about Stolberg. He goes to Weimar out friendship for the duke. He must also live well with him. t how? In *his* style? No! unless he, too, becomes ered, he will go away. And then what remains for him? t in Copenhagen, not in Weimar. I must write to Stolberg; at shall I say to him? You may please yourself about wing this letter to the duke. I have no objection against On the contrary; for he is assuredly not yet arrived at t point when he will not listen to the honest word of a nd. KLOPSTOCK."

Goethe's answer, dated the 21st of May, a fortnight later, refore, runs thus:

In future, spare us such letters, dear Klopstock! They no good, and only breed bad blood. You must feel your- that I have no answer to make. Either I must, like a oolboy, begin a *Pater peccavi*, or sophistically excuse, or as honest fellow defend, and perhaps a mingling of all these ht express the truth, but to what purpose? Therefore, a word more between us on this subject. Believe me I uld not have a moment's rest if I replied to all such admoni- s. It pained the duke a moment to think it was Klopstock. loves and honours you; you know I do the same. Good- Stolberg must come all the same. We are no worse; with God's help will be better than what he has seen us."

o this Klopstock indignantly replied:—

You have much misunderstood the proof of my friendship, h was great, precisely because of my reluctance to mix elf unasked in the affairs of others. And as you include uch letters and *all* such admonitions (your expressions are

as strong as that) in the same class with the letter whi contained this proof of my friendship, I hereby declare y unworthy of that friendship. Stolberg shall not come, if listens to me, or rather if he listens to his own conscience."

The breach thus made was never repaired. Stolberg d not come to Weimar; and Klopstock wrote no more.

To return: whatever basis there may have been for t reports which Gossip magnified, certain it is that the du did not forget the cares of state in these wild orgies. Bo he and his friend were very active, and very serious. Weimar, according to the historian of Germany,[1] stands an illustrious exception among the German courts, it w because Karl August, upheld by his friend, knew how carry into earnest practice the axiom of Frederick the Gre "A king is but the first of subjects." Goethe's benefice activity is seen less in such anecdotes as those often cited his opening a subscription for Bürger to enable him to co plete his translation of *Homer*, and of his relieving Ju Stilling from distress, than in the constant and *democra* sympathy with which he directed the duke's endeavours.

That he had not the grave deportment of a councillor very evident. Imagine him as in this anecdote related Gleim: "Soon after Goethe had written *Werther* I came Weimar, and wished to know him. I had brought with the last *Musen Almanack*, a literary novelty, and read he and there a poem to the company in which I passed t evening. While I was reading, a young man, booted a spurred, in a short green shooting-jacket thrown open, ca in and mingled with the audience. I had scarcely remark his entrance. He sat down opposite to me and listen attentively. I scarcely knew what there was about him t particularly struck me, except a pair of brilliant black Itali eyes. But it was decreed that I should know more of him.

"During a short pause, in which some gentlemen and lad were discussing the merits of the pieces I had read, laudi some and censuring others, the gallant young sportsman (such I took him to be) arose from his chair, and bowing w a most courteous and ingratiating air to me, offered to reli me from time to time in reading, lest I should be tired. could do no less than accept so polite an offer, and imm diately handed him the book. But oh! Apollo and all

[1] MENZEL, ccxli.

uses—not forgetting the Graces—what was I then to hear? first, indeed, things went on smoothly enough:

Die Zephyr'n lauschten,
Die Bäche rauschten,
Die Sonne
Verbreitet ihr Licht mit Wonne—

e somewhat more solid, substantial fare of Voss, Stolberg, d Bürger was delivered in such a manner that no one had y reason to complain.

"All at once, however, it was as if some wild and wanton vil had taken possession of the young reader, and I thought aw the Wild Huntsman bodily before me. He read poems it had no existence in the *Almanach;* broke out into all ssible modes and dialects. Hexameters, Iambics, doggerel rses one after another, or blended in strange confusion, me tumbling out in torrents. What wild and humorous cies did he not combine that evening! Amidst them me such noble, magnificent thoughts, thrown in detached l flitting, that the authors to whom he ascribed them must e thanked God on their knees if they had fallen upon ir desks.

'As soon as the joke was discovered, universal merriment ead through the room. He put everybody present out of ntenance in one way or the other. Even my Mæcenasship, ch I had always regarded it as a sort of duty to exercise ards young authors, poets, and artists, had its turn. ough he praised it highly on the one side, he did not et to insinuate on the other that I claimed a sort of perty in the individuals to whom I afforded support and ntenance. In a little fable composed extempore in gerel verses, he likened me wittily enough to a worthy most enduring turkey hen, that sits on a great heap of s of her own and other people's, and hatches them with ite patience; but to whom it sometimes happens to have alk egg put under her instead of a real one: a trick at ch she takes no offence.

'That is either Goethe or the Devil!" cried I to Wieland, sat opposite me. 'Both,' he replied."

is worth bearing in mind *what* the young Goethe was, we may the better understand the reason of what he me. No sooner had he commenced his career as politician, he began to tone down the extravagance of his demeanour;

without foregoing any enjoyments, he tried to accord mor with those in whom a staid demeanour was necessitated b their more flagging pulses of lethargic life. One month aft his appointment Wieland writes of him: "Goethe did i truth, during the first months of his visit here, scandali most people (never me); but from the moment that H decided on becoming a man of business, he has conducte himself with blameless σωφροσυνη and all worldly prudence Elsewhere he says: "Goethe, with all his real and appare *sauvagerie*, has, in his little finger, more *conduite* and *savo faire* than all the court parasites, Boniface sneaks, an political cobweb-spinners have in their whole bodies an souls. So long as Karl August lives no power can remo him."

As we familiarise ourselves with the details of this episod there appears less and less plausibility in the often iterate declamation against Goethe on the charge of his havi "sacrificed his genius to the court." It becomes indeed singularly foolish display of rhetoric. Let us for a mome consider the charge. He had to choose a career. That poet was then, as it is still, terribly delusive; verse cou create fame, but no money: *fama* and *fames* were then, now, in terrible contiguity. No sooner is the necessity f a career admitted than much objection falls to the groun for those who reproach him with having wasted his time c court festivities, and the duties of government which othe could have done as well, must ask whether he would ha *saved* that time had he followed the career of jurisprudenc and jostled lawyers through the courts at Frankfurt? or wou they prefer seeing him reduced to the condition of poor Schille wasting so much of his precious life in literary "hackwork translating French books for a miserable pittance? *Time*, any case, would have been claimed; in return for that giv to Karl August, he received, as he confesses in the poe addressed to the duke, "what the great seldom bestow- affection, leisure, confidence, garden and house. No o have I had to thank but him; and much have I wante who, as a poet, ill-understood the arts of gain. If Euro praised me, what has Europe done for me? Nothing. Ev my works have been an expense to me."

In 1801, writing to his mother on the complaints utter against him by those who judged falsely of his condition, says they only saw what he gave up, not what he gained—th

uld not comprehend how he grew daily richer, though he ly gave up so much. He confesses that the narrow circle a burgher life would have ill-accorded with his ardent and le-sweeping spirit. Had he remained at Frankfurt, he would ve been ignorant of the world. But here the panorama of was unrolled before him, and his experience was every- y enlarged. Did not Leonardo da Vinci spend much of his e charming the court of Milan with his poetry and lute- ying? did he not also spend time in mechanical and hydro- tical labours for the state? No reproach is lifted against august name; no one cries out against *his* being false to genius; no one rebukes him for having painted so little at e period. The "Last Supper" speaks for him. Will not *sso*, *Iphigenia*, *Hermann und Dorothea*, *Faust*, *Meister*, and long list of Goethe's works, speak for *him?*

have dwelt mainly on the dissipation of his *time*, because notion that a court life affected his genius by "corrupting mind" is preposterous. No reader of this biography, it is be hoped, will fail to see the true relations in which he od to the duke; how free they were from anything like vility, or suppression of genuine impulse. Indeed one of complaints against him, according to the unexceptionable nority of Riemer, was that made by the subalterns, "of his being sufficiently attentive to court etiquette." To say, Niebuhr says, that the "court was a Dalilah to which he rificed his locks," is profoundly to misunderstand his ius, profoundly to misread his life. Had his genius been hat stormy kind which produces great Reformers and great rtyrs,—had it been his mission to agitate mankind by words ch, reverberating to their inmost recesses, called them to down their lives in the service of an Idea,—had it been tendency to meditate upon the far-off destinies of man, and y men by the coercion of grand representative abstractions hen, indeed, we might say his place was aloof from the ley throng, and not in sailing down the swiftly-flowing am to sounds of mirth and music on the banks. But he not a Reformer, not a Martyr. He was a Poet, whose ion was Beauty, whose worship was of Nature, whose aim Culture. His mission was to paint Life, and for that it requisite he should see it. Happier circumstances might ed have surrounded him, and given him a greater sphere. ould have been very different, as he often felt, if there had h a Nation to appeal to, instead of a heterogeneous mass of

small peoples, willing enough to talk of Fatherland, but nowise prepared to *become* a Nation. There are many oth *ifs* in which much virtue could be found; but inasmuch as could not create circumstances, we must follow his exampl and be content with what the gods provided. I do not, confess, see what other sphere was open to him in which h genius could have been more sacred; but I do see that built out of circumstances a noble Temple in which the alt flame burnt with a steady light. To hypothetical biographe be left the task of settling what Goethe *might have bee* enough for us to catch some glimpse of what he was.

"Poetry," says Carlyle, "is the attempt which man mak to render his existence harmonious." It is the flower in which a life expands; but it is not the life itself, with all da needs, daily struggles, daily prosaisms. The true poet ma fully accepts the condition in which destiny has placed hi and therein tries to make his existence harmonious; the sha poet, like a weak workman, fretful over his tools, is loud his assurances of what he *might* be, were it his lot to live other circumstances. Goethe was led by the current of even to a little court, where he was arrested by friendship, lo leisure, and opportunities of a freer, nobler life than Frankf Law Courts offered him. After much deliberation he cho his career: these pages will show how in it he contrived to *true* to his genius.

It is scarcely worth while to notice trash about his servil and court slavery. He was not required to be servile; a his nature was as proud as any prince's. "They call me prince's servant," he said to Eckermann, "and a princ slave; as if there were any meaning in such words! Whom I serve? A tyrant—a despot? Do I serve one who lives his own pleasures at the people's cost? Such princes a such times are, thank God! far enough from us. For mo than half a century I have been connected in the closest re tions with the grand-duke, and for half a century have striv and toiled with him; but I should not be speaking truth w I to say that I could name a single day on which the du had not his thoughts busied with something to be devised a effected for the good of the country; something calculated better the condition of each individual in it. As for hims personally, what has his princely state given him but a burd and a task? Is his dwelling, or his dress, or his table m sumptuously provided than that of any private man in e

cumstances? Go into our maritime cities, and you will d the larder and cellar of every considerable merchant better ed than his. If, then, I am a prince's slave, it is at least consolation that I am but the slave of one who is himself lave of the general good."

And to close this subject, read the following passage from erck's letter to Nicolai—(the Merck who is said by Falk have spoken so bitterly of the waste of Goethe's life at eimar): "I have lately paid Goethe a visit at the Wartburg, d we have lived together for ten days like children. I am ighted to have seen with my own eyes what his situation is. e duke is the best of all, and has a character firm as iron: *ould do, for love of him, just what Goethe does.* . . . I tell sincerely that the duke is most worthy of respect, and e of the cleverest men that I have ever seen,—and consider t he is a prince, and only twenty years of age!" The long friendly correspondence Merck kept up with the duke is best pledge that the foregoing estimate was sincere.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRAU VON STEIN

OM out the many flirtations that amused him, there rises which grew into predominant importance, swallowing up the others, and leaping from lambent flame into eager and sionate fire. It was no transitory flash, but a fire which nt for ten years; and thereby is distinguished from all vious attachments. It is a silver thread woven among the ny-coloured threads which formed the tapestry of his life. ill here detach it, to consider it by itself.

The Baroness von Stein, "Hofdame," and wife of the ster of the Horse, was, both by family and position, a con- rable person. To us she is interesting, as having sprung a Scotch family, named Irving, and as being the sister- aw to that Baron Imhoff who sold his first wife to Warren stings. She was the mother of seven children, and had hed that age which, in fascinating women, is of perilous ination—the age of three-and-thirty. We can understand ething of her power if we look at her portrait, and imagine e delicate, coquettish features animated with the lures of

sensibility, gaiety, and experience of the world. She sang well, played well, sketched well, talked well, appreciated poetry, and handled sentiment with the delicate tact of a woman of the world. Her pretty fingers had turned over many a serious book; and she knew how to gather honey from weeds. With moral deficiencies, which this history will betray, she was to all acquaintances a perfectly *charming* woman; and retained her charm even in old age, as many living witnesses testify. Some years after her first acquaintance with Goethe, Schiller thus writes of her to his friend Körner: "She is really a genuine, interesting person, and I quite understand what has attached Goethe to her. Beautiful she can never have been but her countenance has a soft earnestness, and a quite peculiar openness. A healthy understanding, truth, and feeling, lie in her nature. She has more than a thousand letters from Goethe; and from Italy he writes to her every week. They say the connection is perfectly pure and blameless."

It was at Pyrmont that Goethe first saw the Frau von Stein's portrait, and was three nights sleepless in consequence of Zimmermann's description of her. In sending her that flattering detail, Zimmermann added, "he will assuredly come to Weimar to see you." Under her portrait Goethe wrote: "What a glorious poem it would be to see how the world mirrors itself in this soul! She sees the world as it is, and yet withal sees it through the medium of love; hence sweetness is the dominant expression." In her reply to Zimmermann she begs to hear more about Goethe, and intimates her desire to see him. This calls forth a reply that she "has no idea of the danger of his magical presence." Such dangers pretty women gladly run into, especially when, like Charlotte von Stein, they are perfect mistresses of themselves.

With his heart still trembling from the agitations of victory over its desires, after he had torn himself away from Lili, he saw this charming woman. The earth continues warm long after the sun has glided below the horizon; and the heart continues warm some time after the departure of its sun. Goethe was therefore prepared to fall desperately in love with one who "viewed all things through the medium of love." And there is considerable interest in noting the *kind* of idol now selected. Hitherto he has been captivated only by very young girls, whose youth, beauty, and girlishness were the charms to his wandering fancy; but now he is fascinated by a *woman*, a woman of rank and elegance, a woman of culture

nd experience, a woman who, instead of abandoning herself
o the charm of his affection, knew how, without descending
rom her pedestal, to keep the flame alive. The others loved
im,—showed him their love,—and were forgotten. She con-
rived to keep him in the pleasant fever of hope; made herself
ecessary to him; made her love an aim, and kept him in the
xcitement of one

"Who never is, but always to be blest."

Considering the state of society and opinion at that period, nd considering moreover that, according to her son's narra- ve, her husband was scarcely seen in his own home more han once a week, and that no pretence of affection existed etween them, we could understand how Goethe's notorious assion for her excited sympathy in Weimar. Not a word of lame escaped any one on this subject. They saw a lover hose mistress gave him just enough encouragement to keep im eager in pursuit, and who knew how to check him when hat eagerness would press on too far. In his early letters to er there are sudden outbreaks and reserves; sometimes the ffectionate *thou* escapes, and the next day, perhaps even in he next sentence, the prescribed *you* returns. The letters llow almost daily. So early as January 1776 this significant hrase escapes: "Adieu, angel! I shall never become more udent; and have to thank God for it. Adieu! and yet it ieves me that I love thee so—and precisely thee!"

Here is an answer, apparently, to something she has written or unhappily we have none of *her* letters: she had taken the ecaution to demand her letters back from him, and burnt em, carefully preserving his):

"Wherefore must I plague thee! dearest creature! Where- re deceive myself and plague thee! We can be nothing to ch other, and yet are too much to each other. Believe me ou art in all things one with me—but because I see things they are it makes me mad! Good night, angel, and good orning. I will see thee no more . . . Only . . . Thou owest all . . . My heart is . . . All I can say is mere ly. In future I shall see thee as men see the stars." A v days after, he writes, "Adieu, dear sister, since it must so."

I select the following as indicating the tone: "*1st May.* -day I shall not see you. Your presence yesterday made wonderful an impression on me, that I know not as yet

whether I am well or ill from it. Adieu, dearest lady "*1st May. Evening.* Thou art right to make me a sai that is to say, to remove me from thy heart. Holy as th art, I cannot make *thee* a saint. To-morrow, therefore . Well, I will not see thee. Good night!" On the 24th May, a passionate letter reveals that she had written or spok to him in a decided tone about "appearances" and "t world": "So the purest, most beautiful, truest relation I ev had to a woman, except to my sister, *that* also must be d turbed! I was prepared for it; but I suffered infinitely account of the past and the future, and of the poor child th consecrated in sorrow. I will not see you; your presen would make me sad. If I am not to live with you, yo love will help me no more than the love of those absent, which I am so rich. *Presence*, in the moment of nee discerns, alleviates, and strengthens. The absent comes wi the hose when the fire is extinguished—and all for the sa of the world! The world, which can be nothing to me, w not let thee be anything to me. You know not what you . . . The hand of one in solitude who hears not the voi of love, presses hard where it rests. Adieu, best of women "*25th May.* You are always the same, always infinite lo and goodness. Forgive me if I make you suffer. I will lea to bear my suffering alone." "*2nd June.* Adieu. Love n as ever, I will come seldomer and write seldomer." "4 *June.* Here, dear lady, is a tribute. I will see if I can ke my resolution not to come. You are not quite safe with m Yesterday there were again some moments in which I tru felt how I love you." "*6th June.* So you could do me t unkindness of remaining away yesterday. Truly what you must be right in my eyes!! But it made me sad." "*7th Ju* You are a darling to have told me all! When one loves o should tell everything. Dearest angel, and I have again th words which will set you at rest, but only words from me thee! I shall come to-day."

She was forced to quit Weimar for a while. "Dear lady," he writes, "I dare not think you are going away Tuesday, and that you will be away from me six mont For what avails all else? It is *presence* alone which influenc consoles, and edifies! even though it sometimes torments torment is the sunshower of love."

Here is a curious passage: "Last night as I lay in b half asleep, Philip brought me a letter; half stupefied, I read

hat Lili is betrothed!! I turn round and fall asleep. How I pray that fate may act so by me in the right moment. Dear ngel, good night." One more extract. "Oh! you have a way of giving pain which is like that of destiny, which admits of no complaint, however it may grieve."

In a little while the tone grows more subdued. Just as the one of his behaviour in Weimar, after the first wild weeks, became softened to a lower key, so in these letters we see, after a while, fewer passionate outbreaks, fewer interjections, and no more *thou's*. But love warms them still. The letters are incessant, and show an incessant preoccupation. Certain sentimental readers will be shocked, perhaps, to find so many details about eating and drinking; but when they remember Charlotte cutting bread and butter, they may understand the author of *Werther* eloquently begging his beloved to send him a sausage.

The visitor may still read the inscription, at once homage and souvenir, by which Goethe connected the happy hours of love with the happy hours of active solitude passed in his Garden-house in the Park. Fitly is the place dedicated to the Frau von Stein. The whole spot speaks of her. Here are the flower-beds from which almost every morning flowers, with the dew still on them, accompanied letters, not less fresh and beautiful, to greet the beloved. Here are the beds from which came the asparagus he was so proud to send her. Here is the orchard in which grew the fruit he so often sent. Here is the room in which he dreamt of her; here the room in which he worked, while her image hovered round him. The house stands within twenty minutes' walk from the house where she lived, separated by clusters of noble trees.

If the reader turns back to the description of the Park, he will ascertain the position of this Gartenhaus. Originally it belonged to Bertuch. One day, when the duke was earnestly pressing Goethe to take up his residence at Weimar, the poet who then lived in the Jägerhaus in the Belvidere Allée), undecided as to whether he should go or remain, let fall, among other excuses, the want of a quiet bit of land, where his taste for gardening could be indulged. "Bertuch, for example, is very comfortable; if I had but such a piece of ground as that!" Hereupon the duke, very characteristically, goes to Bertuch, and without periphrasis, says, "I must have your garden." Bertuch starts: "But, your highness—" "But me no buts," replies the young prince; "I can't help you.

Goethe wants it, and unless we give it to him we shall never keep him here; it is the only way to secure him." This reason would probably not have been so cogent with Bertuch had not the duke excused the despotism of his act by giving in exchange more than the value of the garden. It was at first only lent to Goethe; but in 1780 it was made a formal gift.

It is charmingly situated, and, although of modest pretensions, is one of the most enviable houses in Weimar. The Ilm runs through the meadows which front it. The town, although so near, is completely shut out from view by the thick-growing trees. The solitude is absolute, broken only by the occasional sound of the church clock, the music from the barracks, and the screaming of the peacocks spreading their superb beauty in the park. So fond was Goethe of this house, that winter and summer he lived there for seven years and when, in 1782, the duke made him a present of the house in the *Frauenplan*, he could not prevail upon himself to sell the Gartenhaus, but continued to make it a favourite retreat. Often when he chose to be alone and undisturbed he locked all the gates of the bridges which led from the town to his house, so that, as Wieland complained, no one could get at him except by aid of picklock and crowbar.

It was here, in this little garden, he studied the development of plants, and made many of those experiments and observations which have given him a high rank among the discoverers in Science. It was here the poet escaped from courts. It was here the lover was happy in his love. How modest this Garden-house really is; how far removed from anything like one's preconceptions of it! It is true that the position is one which many a rich townsman in England would be glad of, as the site for a handsome villa: a pretty orchard and garden on a gentle slope; in front, a good carriage road, running beside a fine meadow, encircled by the stately trees of the park. But the house, a half-pay captain with us would consider a miserable cottage; yet it sufficed for the court favourite and minister. Here the duke was constantly with him; sitting up, till deep in the night, in earnest discussion; often sleeping on the sofa instead of going home. Here both duke and duchess would come and dine with him, in the most simple, unpretending way; the whole banquet in one instance consisting, as we learn from a casual phrase in the Stein correspondence, of "a beer soup and a little cold meat."[1]

[1] Compare also the *Briefwechsel zwischen Karl August und Goethe*, i. 27.

There is something very pleasant in noticing these traits of he simplicity which was then practised. The duke's own ut—the *Borkenhaus*—has already been described (page 200). The hut, for it was nothing else, in which Goethe lived in the Ilmenau mountains, and the more than bourgeois simplicity of he Garden-house, make us aware of one thing among others, amely, that if he sacrificed his genius to a court, it assuredly as not for loaves and fishes, not for luxury and material plendour of any kind. Indeed, such things had no tempta- ion to a man of his simple tastes. "Rich in money," he rites to his beloved, "I shall never become; but, therefore, ll the richer in Confidence, Good Name, and Influence over he minds of men."

It was his love of Nature which made him so indifferent to uxury. That love gave him simplicity and hardihood. In any things he was unlike his nation: notably in his voluntary xposure to two bright, wholesome things, which to his con- emporaries were little less than bugbears—I mean, fresh air nd cold water. The nation which consented to live in the tmosphere of iron stoves, tobacco, and bad breath, and which eemed a pint of water all that man could desire for his blutions, must have been greatly perplexed at seeing Goethe ndulge in fresh air and cold water as enjoyingly as if they ere vices.

Two anecdotes will bring this contrast into relief. So great as the German reluctance to even a necessary exposure to he inclemencies of open-air exercise, that historians inform us a great proportion, especially among the learned classes, em- loyed a miserable substitute for exercise in the shape of a achine, by means of which they comfortably took their dose f movement without leaving their rooms."[1] And Jacobs, in s *Personalien*, records a fact which, while explaining how the bove-named absurdity could have gained ground, paints a sad icture of the life of German youth in those days. Describing s boyish days at Gotha, he says: "Our winter pleasures ere confined to a not very spacious courtyard, exchanged in mmer for a little garden within the walls, which my father red. *We took no walks. Only once a year, when the harvest as ripe, our parents took us out to spend an evening in the lds.*"[2] So little had Goethe of this prejudice against fresh

[1] BIEDERMANN: *Deutschland's Politische Materielle und Sociale Zustände*, p. 343.
[2] Quoted by Mrs. AUSTIN: *Germany from 1760 to 1814*, p. 85.

air, that when he began the rebuilding of his Gartenhaus instead of sleeping at an hotel or at the house of a friend, he lived there through all the building period; and we find him writing, "At last I have a window once more, and can make a fire." On the 3rd of May he writes: "Good morning: here is asparagus. How were you yesterday? Philip baked me a cake; and thereupon, wrapped up in my blue cloak, I lay myself on a dry corner of the terrace and slept amid thunder, lightning, and rain, so gloriously that my bed was afterwards quite disagreeable." On the 19th he writes: "Thanks for the breakfast. I send you something in return. Last night I slept on the terrace, wrapped in my blue cloak, awoke three times, at 12, 2, and 4, and *each time there was a new splendour in the heavens.*" There are other traces of this tendency to bivouac, but these will suffice. He bathed, not only in the morning sunlight, but also in the Ilm, when the moonlight shimmered on it. Always in the free air seeking vigour—

> "Tauche mich in die Sonne früh
> Bad' ab im Monde des Tages Müh'."

The duke shared this love of bathing, which December's cold could not arrest. It was here Goethe learned to swim by the aid of "corks" (which so often served him as an illustration), and no inclemency of the weather could keep him out of the water. The fascination of water luring into its treacherous depths, is wonderfully expressed by him in that ballad, which every one knows, and almost every one tries to translate. I have tried my hand in this version:

THE FISHERMAN.

The water rushed, the water swelled:
A fisherman sat by,
And gazed upon his dancing float
With tranquil-dreaming eye.
And as he sits, and as he looks,
The gurgling waves arise:
A maid, all bright with water-drops,
Stands straight before his eyes.

She sang to him, she spake to him:
"My fish why dost thou snare
With human wit and human guile
Into the killing air?
Couldst see how happy fishes live
Under the stream so clear,
Thyself would plunge into the stream,
And live for ever there.

"Bathe not the lovely sun and moon
Within the cool deep sea,
And with wave-breathing faces rise
In two-fold witchery?
Lure not the misty heaven-deeps
So beautiful and blue?
Lures not thine image, mirrored in
The fresh eternal dew?"

The water rushed, the water swelled,
It clasped his feet, I wis;
A thrill went through his yearning heart
As when two lovers kiss!
She spake to him, she sang to him:
Resistless was her strain;
Half drew him in, half lured him in;
He ne'er was seen again.

One night, while the moon was calmly shining on our poetical bather, a peasant, returning home, was in the act of climbing over the bars of the floating bridge; Goethe espied him, and moved by that spirit of devilry which so often startled Weimar, he gave utterance to wild sepulchral tones, raised himself half out of the water, ducked under, and reappeared howling, to the horror of the aghast peasant, who, hearing such sounds issue from a figure with long floating hair, fled as if a legion of devils were at hand. To this day there remains an ineradicable belief in the existence of the water-sprite who howls among the waters of the Ilm.

CHAPTER V

PRIVATE THEATRICALS

"LET my present life," writes Goethe to Lavater, January 1777, "continue as long as it will, at any rate I have heartily enjoyed a genuine experience of the variegated throng and press of the world—Sorrow, Hope, Love, Work, Wants, Adventure, Ennui, Impatience, Folly, Joy, the Expected and the Unknown, the Superficial and the Profound—just as the dice threw—with fêtes, dances, sledgings—adorned in silk and spangles—a marvellous *ménage!* And withal, dear brother, God be praised, in myself and in my real aims in life I am quite happy."

"Goethe plays indeed a high game at Weimar," writes Merck, "but lives at court after his own fashion. The duke

is an excellent man, let them say what they will, and in Goethe's company will become still more so. What you hear is court scandal and lies. It is true the intimacy between master and servant is very great, but what harm is there in that? *Were Goethe a nobleman it would be thought quite right.* He is the soul and direction of everything, and all are contented with him, because he serves many and injures no one. Who can withstand the disinterestedness of this man?

He had begun to make his presence felt in the serious department of affairs; not only in educating the duke who had chosen him as his friend, but also in practical ameliorations. He had induced the duke to call Herder to Weimar as *Hof Prediger* (court chaplain) and *General-superintendent*, whereat Weimar grumbled, and gossiped, setting afloat stories of Herder having mounted the pulpit in boots and spurs. Not content with these efforts in a higher circle, Goethe sought to improve the condition of the people; and among his plans we note one for the opening of the Ilmenau mines, which for many years had been left untouched.

Amusement went hand in hand with business. Among the varied amusements, one, which greatly occupied his time and fancy, deserves a more special notice, because it will give us a glimpse of the court, and will also show us how the poet turned sport into profit. I allude to the private theatricals which were started shortly after his arrival. It should be premised that the theatre was still in ashes from the fire of 1774.[1] Seyler had carried his troupe of players elsewhere, and Weimar was without its stage. Just at this period private theatricals were even more "the rage" than they are in England at present. In Berlin, Dresden, Frankfurt, Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Fulda, were celebrated amateur troupes. In Würtzburg, for a long while, a *noble* company put on sock and buskin; in Eisenach, prince and court joined in the sport. Even the Universities, which in earlier times had, from religious scruples, denounced the drama, now forgot the antagonism, and in Vienna, Halle, Göttingen, and Jena allowed the students to have private stages.

The Weimar theatre surpassed them all. It had its poet, its composers, its scene painters, its costumiers. Whoever showed any talent for recitation, singing, or dancing, was pressed into service, and had to work as hard as if his bread

[1] On the state of the theatre before Goethe's arrival and subsequently, see PASQUÉ: *Goethe's Theaterleitung in Weimar*, 1863.

depended on it. The almost daily rehearsals of drama, opera, or ballet, occupied and delighted men and women glad to have something to do. The troupe was distinguished: the Duchess Amalia, Karl August, Prince Constantine, Bode, Knebel, Einsiedel, Musæus, Seckendorf, Bertuch, and Goethe; with Corona Schröter, Kotzebue's sister Amalia, and Fräulein Göchhausen. These formed a curious strolling company, wandering from Weimar to all the palaces in the neighbourhood—Ettersburg, Tiefurt, Belvedere, even to Jena, Dornburg, and Ilmenau. Often did Bertuch, as Falk tells us, receive orders to have the sumpter waggon, or travelling kitchen, ready for the early dawn, when the court would start with its wandering troupe. If only a short expedition was intended, three sumpter asses were sufficient. If it was more distant, over hill and dale, far into the distant country, then indeed the night before was a busy one, and all the ducal pots and pans were in requisition. Such boiling and stewing and roasting! such slaughter of capons, pigeons, and fowls! The ponds of the Ilm were dragged for fish: the woods were robbed of their partridges; the cellars were lightened of their wines. With early dawn rode forth the merry party, full of anticipation, wild with animal spirits. On they went through solitudes, the grand old trees of which were wont only to see the soaring hawk poised above their tops, or the wild-eyed deer bounding past the hut of the charcoal burner. On they went: youth, beauty, gladness, and hope, a goodly train, like that which animated the forest of Ardennes, when "under the shade of melancholy boughs" the pensive duke and his followers forgot awhile their cares and "painted pomps."

Their stage was soon arranged. At Ettersburg the traces are still visible of this forest stage, where, when weather permitted, the performances took place. A wing of the chateau was also made into a theatre. But the open-air performances were most relished. To rehearsals and performances in Ettersburg the actors, sometimes as many as twenty, were brought in the duke's equipages; and in the evening, after a joyous supper often enlivened with songs, they were conducted home by the duke's body-guard of hussars bearing torches. It was here they performed Einsiedel's opera, *The Gypsies*, with wonderful illusion. Several scenes of *Götz von Berlichingen* were woven into it. The illuminated trees, the crowd of gypsies in the wood, the dances and songs under the blue starlit heavens, while the sylvan bugle sounded from afar, made up a picture,

the magic of which was never forgotten. On the Ilm also, a Tiefurt, just where the river makes a beautiful bend round th shore, a regular theatre was constructed. Trees, and othe poetical objects, such as fishermen, nixies, water-spirits, moon and stars,—all were introduced with effect.

The performances were of the same varied nature as th theatres. Sometimes French comedies, sometimes seriou works of art, often broad extravaganzas. Occasionally the played charades, in which the plan was pre-arranged, but th dialogue left to the improvisation of the actors. Once whe an actor grew wordy and wandering, they rushed on the stag carried him off by force, and informed the audience (as if were part of the piece) that he was suddenly taken ill. Th records of that time have preserved for us the outline of magical piece, got up in honour of Goethe's birthday— *Minerva's Birth, Life, and Deeds.* It was a magnificen magic-lantern piece, with music by Seckendorf. The chara ters were not represented by puppets, but by gentlemen an ladies, in the so-called *Petit Colisée* at Tiefurt. On the site o this new temple of the Muses stood formerly a solitary woo hut. In the representation every appliance was sought aft which external effect demanded. It took place behind a larg white curtain, *en silhoutte.* In the *Histoire universelle d Théâtres* there is only one example of a theatrical represent tion of this kind, namely, the drama which Chiron presente to his pupil, Achilles, and which had the same object an significance as the Tiefurt drama. In antiquity such repre sentations were called *umbræ palpitantes*, by moderns, *ombr chinoises.* They were introduced at the Weimar court abou this time, by the Duke George of Saxe-Meiningen, and we very much in favour there.

The subject of this Tiefurt piece is remarkable: Jupiter (i the person of the painter Kraus, on whose shoulders wa placed a colossal paste-board head), in order to frustrate th prophecy that on the *accouchement* of his wife Metis, he woul be thrust from the throne, has devoured Metis. Thereupo he suffers terrible pains in the head; Ganymede, hoverin behind him on a great eagle, offers him the cup of necta the pains of the Thunderer increase visibly, and Ganyme soars into the air to fetch Æsculapius and Vulcan. Æscu lapius seeks in vain to cure his master. A Cyclops, who summoned, bleeds him at the nose, without effect. The comes the powerful Vulcan (represented by the young Duk

Karl August), who, holding in one hand his hammer, in the other a great iron bar, and encircled by an apron, approaches his suffering father, and with one good stroke of the hammer splits his divine skull, out of which proceeds Minerva, the goddess of wisdom (represented by Corona Schröter), at first quite a small figure, but by means of appropriate machinery becoming larger and larger every moment, till at last the whole of her tall slim form is revealed, enveloped in light gauze. She is received by Father Zeus in the most friendly manner; and rich gifts are presented to her by all the gods. She is furnished with a helmet, an ægis, and a lance; Ganymede places Jupiter's owl at her feet, and amidst music and choral singing the curtain falls.

In the third and last act, the poet departed from the materials of the myth. He made the new-born goddess read in the Book of Fate, and find there the *28th of August*[1] marked as one of the most fortunate days. She says that "on that day three-and-thirty years ago a man was given to the world, who will be honoured as one of the best and wisest." Then appears a winged genius in the clouds, bearing Goethe's name. Minerva crowns this name, and at the same time dedicates to it the divine gifts which have been immemorially the tokens of her favour; for example, the golden lyre of Apollo, and the flowery wreath of the Muses. The whip of Momus alone, on the thong of which stood the word "Aves," is laid aside and rejected by the goddess; while the names Iphigenia and Faust appear in the clouds in fire transparencies. At the close, Momus advances unabashed, and brings the reputed symbol of his art as a present to Goethe.

Such was the opening and dedication of the new Weimar-Tiefurt Court Theatre. It is obvious that the piece was intended purely to celebrate the birthday of Goethe, the director of this social theatre; and gives us not a bad idea of the ingenuity and pains bestowed upon these amusements. The reader will not fail to notice that if Goethe prepared fêtes for the birthday of his duchess, Weimar also prepared fêtes for the birthday of its poet.

Another favourite magic-lantern piece was *King Midas*, which is mentioned in Amalia's letters to Knebel in the year 1781. But the best known of the Tiefurt dramas is Goethe's operetta *Die Fischerin*, performed in the summer of 1782. The

[1] Goethe's birthday.

charming text, beginning with the famous Erl-König, is pr
served in Goethe's works. The piece was represented in t
Tiefurt Park, partly on the bank of the Ilm near the bridg
partly on the Ilm itself, which was illuminated with numero
torches and lamps. Under lofty alders against the river we
placed scattered huts of fishermen; nets, boats, and fishi
implements stood around. On Dorten's (Corona Schröte
hearth fire was burning. At the moment in which the fish
men, who had been called together, lighted their strips
wood and torches, and spread themselves with their brillia
lights in boats and on the banks of the river, to search for t
lost maiden, the light flashed suddenly up from the necks
land which stretched forward into the Ilm, illuminating t
nearest objects, and showing their reflection in the wat
while the more distant groups of trees and hills lay in de
night. The spectators had assembled in great numbers, a
as they crowded on the wooden bridge, the better to cat
the magical effect of the illumination on the water, their weig
crushed the bridge in, and the eager gazers fell into the riv
No one, however, was injured. The involuntary bathers we
heartily laughed at, and the accident was regarded as
amusing interlude.

I find further that when a travesty of the *Birds* of Aris
phanes was performed at Ettersburg, the actors were all dress
in real feathers, their heads completely covered, though free
move. Their wings flapped, their eyes rolled, and ornitholo
was absurdly parodied. It is right to add, that besides th
extravagances and *ombres chinoises*, there were very seri
dramatic efforts: among them we find Goethe's second d
matic attempt, *Die Mitschuldigen*, which was thus cast:—

Alceste	Goethe.
Söller	Bertuch.
Der Wirth . . .	Musäus.
Sophie	Corona Schröter.

Another play was the *Geschwister*, written in three evenings
is said, but without evidence, out of love for the sweet e
of Amalia Kotzebue, sister of the dramatist, then a you
Kotzebue thus touches the point in his *Memoirs*: "Goe
had at that time just written his charming piece, *Die Ge
wister*. It was performed at a private theatre at Weimar,
himself playing William and my sister Marianne—while to
yes to me—was allotted the important part of postilion!

readers may imagine with what exultation I trod the stage for the first time before the mighty public itself." Another piece was Cumberland's *West Indian*, in which the duke played *Major O'Flaherty*, Eckhoff (the great actor) the Father, and Goethe *Belcour*, dressed in a white coat with silver lace, blue silk vest, and blue silk knee-breeches, in which they say he looked superb.

While mentioning these I must not pass over the *Iphigenia* then in prose), which was thus cast:—

Orestes	Goethe.
Pylades	Prince Constantine.
Thoas	Knebel.
Arkas	Seidler.
Iphigenia	Corona Schröter.

"Never shall I forget," exclaims Dr. Hufeland, "the impression Goethe made as Orestes, in his Grecian costume; one might have fancied him Apollo. Never before had there been seen such union of physical and intellectual beauty in one man!" His acting, as far as I can learn, had the ordinary defects of amateur acting; it was impetuous and yet stiff, exaggerated and yet cold; and his fine sonorous voice displayed itself without nice reference to shades of meaning. In comic parts, on the other hand, he seems to have been excellent; the broader the fun, the more at home he felt; and one can imagine the rollicking animal spirits with which he animated the Marktschreier in the *Plundersweilern;* one can picture him in the extravagance of the *Geflichte Braut*,[1] giving vent to his sarcasm on the "sentimental" tone of the age, ridiculing his own *Werther*, and merciless to *Waldemar*.[2]

I have thus brought together, irrespective of dates, the scattered indications of these theatrical amusements. How much enjoyment was produced by them! what social pleasure! and what endless episodes, to which memory recurred in after times, when they were seated round the dinner table! Nor were these amusements profitless. *Wilhelm Meister* was designed and partly written about this period; and the reader, who knows Goethe's tendency to make all his works biographical, will not be surprised at the amount of theatrical experience which is mirrored in that work; nor at the earnestness which

[1] Published, under a very mitigated form, as the *Triumph der Empfindsamkeit.* See the next chapter for further notice of this piece.

[2] Jacobi and Wieland were both seriously offended with his parodies of their writings; but both soon became reconciled to him.

is there made to lurk beneath amusement, so that what to the crowd seems no more than a flattery of their tastes, is to the man himself a process of the highest culture.

Boar-hunting in the light of early dawn, sitting in the middle of the day in grave diplomacy and active council rehearsing during the afternoon, and enlivening the evening with grotesque serenades or torchlight sledgings—thus passed many of his days; not to mention flirtations, balls, masquerades, concerts, and verse-writing. The muse was, however, somewhat silent, though *Hans Sachs' poetische Sendung*, *Lila*, some charming lyrics, and the dramas and operas written for the occasion, forbid the accusation of idleness. He was storing up materials. *Faust*, *Egmont*, *Tasso*, *Iphigenia* and *Meister* were germinating.

The muse was silent, but was the soul inactive? As these strange and variegated scenes passed before his eyes, was he a *mere* actor, and not also a spectator? Let his works answer. To some indeed it has seemed as if in thus lowering great faculties to the composition of slight operas and festive pieces Goethe was faithless to his mission, false to his own genius. This is but a repetition of Merck's exclamation against *Clavigo*, and may be answered as that was answered. Herder thought that the Chosen One should devote himself to great works. This is the objection of a man of letters who can conceive no other aim than the writing of books. But Goethe needed to *live* as well as to write. Life is multiplied and rendered infinite by Feeling and Knowledge. He sought both to feel and to know. The great works he has written—works high in conception, austerely grand in execution, the fruits of earnest toil and lonely self-seclusion—ought to shield him *now* from any charge of wasting his time on frivolities, though to Herder and Merck such a point of view was denied.

It was his real artistic nature, and genuine poetic mobility, that made him scatter with a prodigal hand the trifles which distressed his friends. Poetry was the melodious voice breathing from his entire manhood, not a profession, not an act of duty. It was an impulse: the sounding chords of his poetic nature vibrated to every touch, grave and stately, sweet and impassioned, delicate and humorous. He wrote not for Fame. He wrote not for Pence. He wrote poetry because he had *lived* it; and sang as the bird sings on its bough. Open to every impression, touched to ravishment by beauty, he sang whatever at the moment filled him with delight—now trilling

a careless snatch of melody, now a simple ballad, now a majestic hymn ascending from the depths of his soul on incense-bearing rhythms, and now a grave quiet chaunt, slow with its rich burden of meanings. Men in whom the productive activity is great, cannot be restrained from throwing off trifles, as the plant throws off buds beside the expanded flowers. Michael Angelo carved the Moses, and painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, but did he not also lend his master-hand to the cutting of graceful cameos?

CHAPTER VI

MANY-COLOURED THREADS

HITHERTO our narrative of this Weimar period has moved mainly among generalities, for only by such means could a picture of this episode be painted. Now, as we advance further, it is necessary to separate the threads of his career from those of others with which it was interwoven.

It has already been noted, that he began to tire of the follies and extravagancies of the first months. In this year, 1777, he was quiet in his Garden-house, occupied with drawing, poetry, botany, and the one constant occupation of his heart—love for the Frau von Stein. Love and ambition were the guides which led him through the labyrinth of the court. Amid those motley scenes, amid those swiftly-succeeding pleasures, Voices, sorrowing Voices of the Past, made themselves audible above the din, and recalled the vast hopes which once had given energy to his aims; and these reverberations of an ambition once so cherished, arrested and rebuked him, like the deep murmurs of some solemn bass moving slowly through the showering caprices of a sportive melody. No soul can endure uninterrupted gaiety and excitement. Weary intervals will occur: the vulgar soul fills these intervals with the long lassitude of its ennui; the noble soul with reproaches at the previous waste of irrevocable hours.

The quiet influence exercised by the Frau von Stein is visible in every page of his letters. As far as I can divine the state of things in the absence of her letters, I fancy she coquetted with him; when he showed any disposition to

throw off her yoke, when his manner seemed to imply le warmth, she lured him back with tenderness; and vexed hi with unexpected coldness when she had drawn him on more to her feet. "You reproach me," he writes, "wi alternations in my love. It is not true; but it is well th I do not every day feel how utterly I love you." Again: " cannot conceive why the main ingredients of your feelin have lately been Doubt and want of Belief. But it is certain true that one who did not hold firm his affection might ha that affection doubted away, just as a man may be persuade that he is pale and ill." That she tormented him with the coquettish doubts is but too evident; and yet when he is aw from her she writes to tell him he is become dearer! "Ye my treasure!" he replies, "I believe you when you say yo love increases for me during absence. When away, you lo the idea you have formed of me; but when present, that id is often disturbed by my folly and madness. . . . I love yo better when present than when absent: hence I conclude m love is truer than yours." At times he seems himself to ha doubted whether he really loved her, or only loved the delig of her presence.

With these doubts mingles another element, his ambitio to do something which will make him worthy of her. In spi of his popularity, in spite of his genius, he has not subdued h heart, but only agitated it. He endeavours, by *devotion*, succeed. Thus love and ambition play into each othe hands, and keep him in a seclusion which astonishes a pains several of those who could never have enough of h company.

In the June of this year his solitude was visited by one the agitations he could least withstand—the death of his on sister, Cornelia. *Sorrows and dreams*, is the significant ent of the following day in his journal.

It was about this time that he undertook the care of Pet Imbaumgarten, a Swiss peasant boy, the protégé of his frie Baron Lindau. The death of the Baron left Peter once mo without protection. Goethe, whose heart was open to a especially to children, gladly undertook to continue the Baro care; and as we have seen him sending home an Itali image-boy to his mother at Frankfurt, and *Wilhelm Meis* undertaking the care of *Mignon* and *Felix*, so does th "cold" Goethe add love to charity, and become a father the fatherless.

The autumn tints were beginning to mingle their red and ellow with the dark and solemn firs of the Ilmenau moun- ains; Goethe and the duke could not long keep away from ne loved spot, where poetical and practical schemes occupied ne day, and many a wild prank startled the night. There ney danced with peasant girls till early dawn; one result of hich was a swelled face, forcing Goethe to lay up.

On his return to Weimar he was distressed by the receipt of ne of the many letters which *Werther* drew upon him. He ad made sentimentality poetical; it soon became a fashion. Many were the melancholy youths who poured forth their orrows to him, demanding sympathy and consolation. Nothing ould be more antipathetic to his clear and healthy nature. It ade him ashamed of his *Werther*. It made him merciless to ll Wertherism. To relieve himself of the annoyance, he com- enced the satirical extravaganza of the *Triumph der Emp- ndsamkeit*. Very significant, however, of the unalterable ndliness of his disposition is the fact, that although these ntimentalities had to him only a painful or a ludicrous spect, he did not suffer his repugnance to the malady to estroy his sympathy for the patient. There is a proof of this the episode he narrates of his Harz journey, made in ovember and December of this year,[1] known to most readers rough his poem, *Die Harzreise in Winter*. The object of at journey was two-fold; to visit the Ilmenau mines, and to sit an unhappy misanthrope whose Wertherism had distressed im. He set out with the duke, who had arranged a hunting arty to destroy "a great thing of a boar" then ravaging the ountry round Eisenach; but, although setting out with them, e left them, *en route*, for purposes of his own.

Through hail, frost, and mud, lonely, yet companioned by eat thoughts, he rode along the mountainous solitudes, and ached at last the *Brocken*. A bright sun shone on its ernal snows as he mounted, and looked down upon the oud-covered Germany beneath him. Here he felt the air freedom swell his breast. The world with its conventions y beneath him; the court with its distractions was afar; and e poet stood amidst these snowy solitudes communing with at majestic spirit of beauty which animates Nature. There,

> . . . "high above the misty air
> And turbulence of murmuring cities vast,"[2]

[1] And *not* in 1776, as he says; that date is disproved by his letters to the au von Stein.

[2] Wordsworth.

he was lost in reveries of his future life:

> Dem Geier gleich
> Der auf schweren Morgenwolken,
> Mit sanftem Fittig ruhend,
> Nach Beute schaut,
> Schwebe mein Lied.

This image of the hawk poised above the heavy morni clouds looking for his prey, is (I adopt his own explanatio that of the poet on the snowy heights looking down on t winter landscape, and with his mind's eye seeking amidst t perplexities of social life for some object worthy of his muse

Writing to his beloved, he speaks of the good effect th journeying amid simple people (to whom he is only known Herr Weber, a landscape painter) has upon his imaginatio It is like a cold bath, he says. And *à propos* of his disguis he remarks how very *easy* it is to be a rogue, and what adva tages it gives one over simple honest men to assume a charact that is not your own.

But now let us turn to the *second* object of his journe The letter of the misanthrope just alluded to was sign Plessing, and dated from Wernigerode. There was som thing remarkable in the excess of its morbidity, accompani by indications of real talent. Goethe did not answer it, havi already hampered himself in various ways by responding such extraneous demands upon his sympathy; another a more passionate letter came imploring an answer, which w still silently avoided. But now the idea of personally asce taining what manner of man his correspondent was, made h swerve from his path; and under his assumed name he call on Plessing.

On hearing that his visitor came from Gotha, Plessi eagerly inquired whether he had not visited Weimar, a whether he knew the celebrated men who lived there. Wi perfect simplicity Goethe replied that he did, and began ta ing of Kraus, Bertuch, Musäus, Jagemann, &c., when he w impatiently interrupted with "But why don't you menti Goethe?" He answered that Goethe also had he seen; up this he was called upon to give a description of that great po which he did in a quiet way, sufficient to have betrayed incognito to more sagacious eyes.

Plessing then with great agitation informed him that Goet had not answered a most pressing and passionate letter which he, Plessing, had described the state of his mind, a

had implored direction and assistance. Goethe excused himself as he best could; but Plessing insisted on reading him the letters, that he might judge whether they deserved such treatment.

He listened, and tried by temperate sympathetic counsel to wean Plessing from his morbid thoughts by fixing them on external objects, especially by some active employment. These were impatiently rejected, and he left him, feeling that the case was almost beyond help.

He was subsequently able to assist Plessing, who, on visiting him at Weimar, discovered his old acquaintance, the landscape painter.[1] But the characteristic part of this anecdote—and that which makes me cite it here—is, the practical illustration it gives of his fundamental realism, which looked to nature and earnest activity as the sole cure for megrims, sentimentalisms, and self-torturings. Turn your mind to realities, and the self-made phantoms which darken your soul will disappear like night at the approach of dawn.

In the January of the following year (1778) Goethe was twice brought face to face with Death. The first was during a boar-hunt: his spear snapped in the onslaught, and he was in imminent peril, but fortunately escaped. On the following day, while he and the duke were skating (perhaps talking over yesterday's escape), there came a crowd over the ice, bearing the corpse of the unhappy Fräulein von Lassberg, who, in the despair of unrequited love, had drowned herself in the Ilm, close by the very spot where Goethe was wont to take his evening walk. At all times this would have been a shock to him, but the shock was greatly intensified by the fact that in the pocket of the unfortunate girl was found a copy of *Werther!*[2] It is true we never reproach an author in such cases. No reflecting man ever reproached Plato with the suicide of Cleombrotus, or Schiller with the brigandage of highwaymen. Yet when fatal consequences occur, the author,

[1] In 1788, Plessing was appointed professor of philosophy in the university of Duisburg, where Goethe visited him on his return home from the campaign in France, 1792. The reader may be interested to know, that Plessing entirely outlived his morbid melancholy, and gained a respectable name in German letters. His principal works are *Osiris und Socrates*, 1783; *Historische und Philosophische Untersuchungen über die Denkart Theologie und Philosophie der ältesten Völker*, 1785; and *Memnonium, oder Versuche zur Enthüllung der Geheimnisse des Alterthums*, 1787. He died 1806.

[2] Riemer, who will never admit anything that may seem to tell against his idol, endeavours to throw a doubt on this fact, saying it was reported only out of malice. But he gives no reasons.

whom we absolve, cannot so lightly absolve himself. It is i vain to argue that the work does not, rightly considered, lea to suicide; if it does so, *wrongly* considered, it is the prox mate cause; and the author cannot easily shake off tha weight of blame. Goethe, standing upon logic, might hav said: "If Plato instigated the suicide of Cleombrotus, ce tainly he averted that of Olympiodorus; if I have been one the many causes which moved this girl towards that fatal ac I have also certainly been the cause of saving others, notabl that young Frenchman who wrote to thank me." He migh have argued thus; but Conscience is tenderer than Logic and if in firing at a wild beast I kill a brother hunter, m conscience will not leave me altogether in peace.

The body was borne to the house of the Frau von Stei which stood nearest the spot, and there he remained with the whole day, exerting himself to console the wretche parents. He himself had need of some consolation. Th incident affected him deeply, and led him to speculate on a cognate subjects, especially on melancholy. "This invitin sadness," he beautifully says, "has a dangerous fascinatio *like water itself, and we are charmed by the reflex of the stars heaven which shines through both.*"

He was soon, however, "*forced* into theatrical levity" by th various rehearsals necessary for the piece to be performed o the birthday of the duchess. This was the *Triumph d Empfindsamkeit.* The adventure with Plessing, and finally th tragedy of the Fräulein von Lassberg had given increase force to his antagonism against Wertherism and Sentimentalit which he now lashed with unsparing ridicule. The hero his extravaganza is a Prince, whose soul is only fit for moo light ecstasies and sentimental rhapsodies. He adores Nature not the rude, rough, imperfect Nature whose gigantic ener would alarm the sentimental mind; but the beautiful rose-pi Nature of books. He likes Nature as one sees it at the Oper Rocks are picturesque, it is true; but they are often crowne with tiaras of snow, sparkling, but apt to make one "chilly turbulent winds howl through their clefts and crannies, alar ing to delicate nerves. The Prince is not fond of the wind Sunrise and early morn are lovely—but damp; and the Prin is liable to rheumatism.

To obviate all such inconveniences he has had a mechanic imitation of Nature executed for his use; and this accompani him on his travels; so that at a moment's notice, in secu

defiance of rheumatism, he can enjoy a moonlight scene, a sunny landscape, or a sombre grove.

He is in love; but his mistress is as factitious as his landscapes. Woman is charming but capricious, fond but exacting; and therefore the Prince has a doll dressed in the same style as the woman he once loved. By the side of this doll he passes hours of rapture; for it he sighs; for it he rhapsodises.

The *real* woman appears—the original of that much treasured image. Is he enraptured? Not in the least. His heart does not palpitate in her presence; he does not recognise her; but throws himself once more into the arms of his doll, and thus sensibility triumphs.

There are five acts of this "exquisite fooling." Originally it was much coarser, and more personal than we now see it. Böttiger says that there remains scarcely a shadow of its flashing humour and satiric caprice. The whip of Aristophanes was applied with powerful wrist to every fashionable folly, in dress, literature, or morals, and the spectators saw themselves as in a mirror of sarcasm. At the conclusion, the doll was ripped open, and out fell a multitude of books, such as were then the rage, upon which severe and ludicrous judgments were passed—and the severest upon *Werther*. The whole piece was interspersed with ballets, music, and comical changes of scene; so that what now appears a tiresome farce, was then an irresistible extravaganza.

This extravaganza has the foolery of Aristophanes, and the physical fun of that riotous wit, whom Goethe was then studying. But when critics are in ecstasies with its wit and irony, I confess myself at a loss to conceive clearly what they mean. National wit, however, is perhaps scarcely amenable to criticism. What the German thinks exquisitely ludicrous, is to a Frenchman, or an Englishman, generally of mediocre mirthfulness. Wit requires delicate handling; the Germans generally touch it with gloved hands. Sarcasm is with them too often a sabre not a rapier, hacking the victim where a thrust would suffice. It is a noticeable fact that amid all the riches of their Literature they have little that is comic of a high order. They have produced no Comedy. To them may be applied the couplet wherein the great original of Grotesque seriousness set forth its verdict:

> Κωμῳδοδιδασκαλίαν εἶναι χαλεπώτατον ἔργον ἁπάντων.
> Πολλῶν γὰρ δὴ πειρασάντων αὐτὴν ὀλίγοις χαρίσασθαι.[1]

[1] ARISTOPHANES: *Equites*, v. 516.

which I will venture to turn thus:

Miss Comedy is a sad flirt,—you may guess
From the number who court her, the few she doth bless.

CHAPTER VII

THE REAL PHILANTHROPIST

A STRANGE phantasmagoria is the life he leads at this epoch His employments are manifold, yet his studies, his drawing etching, and rehearsing are carried on as if they alone were the occupation of the day. His immense activity, and power of varied employment, scatter the energies which might be consecrated to some great work; but, in return, they give him the varied store of material of which he stood so much in need. At this time he is writing *Wilhelm Meister*, and *Egmont; Iphigenia* is also taking shape in his mind. His office gives him much to do; and Gervinus, who must have known how great were the calls upon his time, should have paused ere he threw out the insinuation of "diplomatic rudeness" when Goethe answered one of his brother-in-law's letters through his secretary. Surely with a brother-in-law one may take such latitude?[1]

This man, whose diplomatic coldness and aristocratic haughtiness have formed the theme of so many long tirades was of all Germans the most sincerely democratic, until the Reign of Terror in France frightened him, as it did others into more modified opinions. Not only was he always delighted to be with the people, and to share their homely ways which were consonant with his own simple tastes, but we find him in the confidence of intimacy expressing his sympathy with the people in the heartiest terms. When among the miners he writes to his beloved, "how strong my love has returned upon me for these lower classes! which one calls the lower, but which in God's eyes are assuredly the highest Here you meet all the virtues combined: Contentedness

[1] Since the text was written, the correspondence with the Frau v. Stein has appeared; and from it we learn that in Switzerland he even dictated some letters to *her!* It could not have been "diplomatic rudeness," inasmuch as he usually wrote to the duke himself through his amanuensis.

Moderation, Truth, Straightforwardness, Joy in the slightest good, Harmlessness, Patience—Patience—Constancy in—— in . . . I will not lose myself in panegyric!" Again, he is writing *Iphigenia*, but the news of the misery and famine among the stocking-weavers of Apolda paralyses him. "The drama will not advance a step: it is cursed; the King of Tauris must speak as if no stocking-weaver in Apolda felt the pangs of hunger!"

In striking contrast stands the expression of his contempt for what was called the great world, as he watched it in his visits to the neighbouring courts. If affection bound him to Karl August, whom he was forming, and to Luise, for whom he had a chivalrous regard, his eyes were not blind to the nullity of other princes and their followers. "Good society have I seen," runs one of his epigrams, "they call it the good' whenever there is not in it the material for the smallest of poems."

> Gute Gesellschaft hab' ich gesehen; man nennt sie die gute
> Wenn sie zum kleinsten Gedicht keine Gelegenheit giebt.

Notably was this the case in his journey with the duke to Berlin, May 1778. He only remained a few days there; *saw* much, and not without contempt. "I have got quite close to old Fritz, having seen his way of life, his gold, his silver, his statues, his apes, his parrots, and heard his own curs twaddle about the great man." Potzdam and Berlin were noisy with preparations for war. The great king was absent; but Prince Henry received the poet in a friendly manner, and invited him and Karl August to dinner. At table there were several generals; but Goethe, who kept his eyes open, sternly kept his mouth closed. He seems to have felt no little contempt for the Prussian court, and its great men, who appeared very small men in his eyes. "I have spoken no word in the Prussian dominions which might not be made public. Therefore I am called haughty and so forth." Varnhagen intimates that the ill-will he excited by not visiting the literati, and by his reserve, was so great as to make him averse from hearing of his visit in after years.[1] What, indeed, as Varnhagen asks, had Goethe in common with Nicolai, Ramler, Engel, Zellner, and the rest? He did visit the poetess Karschin and the artist Chodowiecki; but from the rest he kept aloof. Berlin

[1] *Vermischte Schriften*, iii. p. 62.

was not a city in which he could feel himself at home; and he doubtless was fully aware of the small account in which he was held by Frederick, whose admiration lay in quite other directions. What culture the king had was French, and his opinion of German literature had been very explicitly pronounced in a work published this year, in which *Goetz von Berlichingen* was cited as a sample of the reigning bad taste. The passage is too curious to be omitted. "Vous y verrez représenter les abominables pièces de Shakspear traduites en notre langue, et tout l'auditoire se pâmer d'aise en entendant ces farces ridicules, et dignes *des sauvages de Canada*." That certainly was afflicting to "le bon goût"; but *that* was not the worst. Shakspeare might be pardoned for *his* faults, "car la naissance des arts n'est jamais le point de leur maturité. Mais voilà encore un Goetz de Berlichingen qui parait sur la scène, imitation détestable de ces mauvaises pièces anglaises, et le parterre applaudit et demande avec enthousiasme la répétition de *ces dégoûtantes platitudes!*"[1]

Thus the two German Emperors, Fritz and Wolfgang, held no spiritual congress; perhaps no good result *could* have been elicited by their meeting. Yet they were, each in his own sphere, the two most potent men then reigning. Fritz did not directly assist the literature of his country, but his *indirect* influence has been indicated by Griepenkerl.[2] He awoke the Germans from their sleep by the rolling of drums; those who least liked the clang of arms or the "divisions of a battlefield," were nevertheless awakened to the fact that something important was going on in life, and they rubbed their sleepy eyes, and tried to *see* a little into that. The roll of drum has this merit, at all events, that it draws men from the library table to the window, and so makes them look out upon the moving, living world of action, wherein the erudite may see a considerable sensation made even by men unable to conjugate a Greek verb in "$\mu\iota$."[3]

On returning to Weimar, Goethe occupied himself with various architectural studies, *à propos* of the rebuilding of the

[1] *De la Littérature Allemande*, p. 46. His opinion of the newly discovered Niebelungen Lied was no less characteristically contemptuous: he declared he would not give such rubbish house-room.

[2] *Der Kunstgenius der Deutschen Literatur des letzten Jahrhunderts*, i. p. 5.

[3] Dr. George has become famous (or *did* become so—for, alas! what is fame?) by his shrewd suspicion that Frederick with all his victories could not accomplish *that* feat of intellectual vigour. Many men still measure greatness by verbs in $\mu\iota$.

alace; and commenced those alterations in the Park, which esulted in the beautiful distribution formerly described. But pass over many details of his activity to narrate an episode hich must win the heart of every reader. In these pages it as been evident, I hope, that no compromise with the truth as led me to gloss over faults, or to conceal shortcomings. ll that testimony warrants I have reproduced: good and vil, as in the mingled yarn of life. Faults and deficiencies, ven grievous errors, do not estrange a friend from our hearts; hy should they lower a hero? Why should the biographer ear to trust the tolerance of human sympathy? Why labour o prove a hero faultless? The reader is no *valet de chambre* ncapable of crediting greatness in a *robe de chambre*. Never hould we forget the profound saying of Hegel in answer to he vulgar aphorism ("No man is a hero to his valet de hambre"); namely, "This is not because the Hero is no Hero, but because the Valet is a Valet."[1] Having trusted o the effect which the true man would produce, in spite of ll drawbacks,—and certain that the true man was *lovable* as ell as admirable, I have made no direct appeal to the reader's ympathy, nor tried to make out a case in favour of extra-rdinary virtue.

But the tribute of affectionate applause is claimed now we ave arrived at a passage in his life so *characteristic* of the elicacy, generosity, and nobility of his nature, that it is arcely possible for any one not to love him, after reading . Of generosity, in the more ordinary sense, there are undant examples in his history. Riemer has instanced everal,[2] but these are acts of kindness, thoughtfulness, and urtesy, such as one expects to find in a prosperous poet. hat he was kind, gave freely, sympathised freely, acted isinterestedly, and that his kindness showed itself in trifles uite as much as in important actions (a most significant fact),[3] is known to all persons moderately acquainted with

[1] "Nicht aber darum weil dieser kein Held ist, sondern weil jener der Kammerdiener ist."—*Philosophie der Geschichte*, p. 40. Goethe repeated this as an epigram; and Carlyle has wrought it into the minds of hundreds; but Hegel is the originator.

[2] *Mittheilungen*, vol. i. pp. 102–5.

[3] There is lamentable confusion in our estimate of character on this point as to generosity. We often mistake a spasm of sensibility for the strength of a generous disposition—making an *occasional* act of kindness the sign of a kind nature. Benjamin Constant says of himself: "*Je puis faire de bonnes et fortes actions; je ne puis avoir de bons procédés.*" There are hundreds like him. On the other hand, there are hundreds who willingly perform many little acts of kindness and courtesy, but who never rise to the dignity of generosity; these are *poor* creatures, ignorant of the grander throbbings.

German literature. But the disposition exhibited in story I am about to tell is such as few persons would ha imagined to be lying beneath the stately prudence and ca self-mastery of the man so often styled "heartless."

This is the story: A man (his name still remains a secr of a strange, morbid, suspicious disposition, had fallen in destitution, partly from unfortunate circumstances, partly fr his own fault. He applied to Goethe for assistance, as so ma others did; and he painted his condition with all the eloquen of despair.

"According to the idea I form of you from your letter writes Goethe, "I fancy I am not deceived, and this to me very painful, in believing that I cannot give help or hope one who needs so much. But I am not the man to s 'Arise, and go further.' Accept the little that I can give, a plank thrown towards you for momentary succour. If y remain longer where you are, I will gladly see that in futu you receive some slight assistance. In acknowledging t receipt of this money, pray inform me how far you can ma it go. If you are in want of a dress, greatcoat, boots, or wa stockings, tell me so; I have some that I can spare.

"Accept this drop of balsam from the compendious me cine chest of the Samaritan, in the same spirit as it offered."

This was on the 2nd of November 1778. On the 11th writes again, and from the letter we see that he had resolv to do *more* than throw out a momentary plank to the sh wrecked man—in fact he had undertaken to support him.

"In this parcel you will receive a greatcoat, boots, stoc ings, and some money. My plan for you this winter this:

"In Jena living is cheap. I will arrange for board a lodging, &c., on the strictest economy, and will say it is some one who, with a small pension, desires to live in reti ment. When that is secured I will write to you; you c then go there, establish yourself in your quarters, and I w send you cloth and lining, with the necessary money, fo coat, which you can get made, and I will inform the rec that you were recommended to me, and that you wish to l in retirement at the University.

"You must then invent some plausible story, have yo name entered on the books of the University, and no s will ever inquire more about you, neither Burgomaster n

Amtmann. *I have not sent you one of my coats, because it might be recognised in Jena.* Write to me and let me know what you think of this plan, and at all events in what character you propose to present yourself."

The passage in italics indicates great thoughtfulness. Indeed the whole of this correspondence shows the most tender consideration for the feelings of his protégé. In the postscript he says: "And now step boldly forth again upon the path of life! We live but once. . . . Yes, I know perfectly what it is to take the fate of another upon one's own shoulders, but you shall not perish!" On the 23rd he writes:

"I received to-day your two letters of the 17th and 18th, and have so far anticipated their contents as to have caused inquiry to be made in Jena for the fullest details, as for one who wished to live there under the quiet protection of the University. Till the answer arrives keep you quiet at Gera, and the day after to-morrow I will send you a parcel and say more.

"Believe me you are not a burden on me; on the contrary, it teaches me economy; *I fritter away much of my income which I might spare for those in want.* And do you think that your tears and blessings go for nothing? *He who has, must give, not bless; and if the Great and the Rich have divided between them the goods of this world, Fate has counterbalanced these by giving to the wretched the powers of blessing, powers to which the fortunate know not how to aspire.*"

Noble words! In the mouth of a pharisaical philanthropist *declaiming* instead of *giving*, there would be something revolting in such language; but when we know that the hand which wrote these words was "open as day to melting charity," when we know that (in spite of all other claims) he gave up for some years the sixth part of his very moderate income to rescue this stranger from want, when we know by the irrefragable arguments of deeds, that this language was no hollow phrase, but the deep and solemn utterance of a thoroughly human heart, then, I say, those words awaken reverberations within our hearts, calling up feelings of loving reverence for him who uttered them.

How wise and kind is this also: "Perhaps there will soon turn up occasions for you to be useful to me where you are, for it is not the Project-maker and Promiser, but he who in trifles affords real service, that is welcome to one who would so willingly do something good and enduring.

"Hate not the poor philanthropists with their precautions and conditions, for one need pray diligently to retain, amid such bitter experience, the goodwill, courage, and levity of youth, which are the main ingredients of benevolence. And it is more than a benefit which God bestows when he calls us who can so seldom do anything to lighten the burden of one truly wretched."

The next letter, dated December 11th, explains itself:—

"Your letter of the 7th I received early this morning. And first, to calm your mind: you shall be forced to nothing; the hundred dollars you shall have, live where you may; but now listen to me.

"I know that to a man his ideas are realities; and although the image you have of Jena is false, still I know that nothing is less easily reasoned away than such hypochondriacal anxieties. I think Jena the best place for your residence, and for many reasons. The University has long lost its ancient wildness and aristocratic prejudices; the students are not worse than in other places, and among them there are some charming people. In Jena, they are so accustomed to the flux and reflux of men that no individual is remarked. And there are too many living in excessively straitened means, for poverty to be either a stigma or a noticeable peculiarity. Moreover it is a city where you can more easily procure all necessities. In the country during the winter, ill, and without medical advice would not that be miserable?

"Further, the people to whom I referred you are good domestic people, who, on my account, would treat you well. Whatever might occur to you, I should be in a condition, one way or another, to assist you. I could aid you in establishing yourself; need only for the present guarantee your board and lodging, and pay for it later on. I could give you a little on New Year's Day, and procure what was necessary on credit. You would be nearer to me. Every market day I could send you something—wine, victuals, utensils that would cost me little, and would make your existence more tolerable; and I could thus make you more a part of my household expense. The objection to Gera is, that communication with it is so difficult; things do not arrive at proper times, and cost money which benefits no one. You would probably remain six months in Jena before any one remarked your presence. That is the reason why I preferred Jena to every other place, and you would do the same if you could but see things with my

troubled vision. How, if you were to make a trial? However, I know a fly can distract a man with sensitive nerves, and that, in such cases, reasoning is powerless.

"Consider it: it will make all things easier. I promise you, you will be confortable in Jena. But if you cannot overcome your objections, then remain in Gera. At New Year you shall have twenty-five dollars, and the same regularly every quarter. I cannot arrange it otherwise. I must look to my own household demands; that which I have given you already, because I was quite unprepared for it, has made a hole, which I must stop up as I can. If you were in Jena, I could give you some little commissions to execute for me, and perhaps some occupation; I could also make your personal acquaintance, and so on. But act just as your feelings dictate; if my reasons do not convince you, remain in your present solitude. Commence the writing of your life, as you talk of doing, and send it me piecemeal, and be persuaded that I am only anxious for your quiet and comfort, and choose Jena simply because I could there do more for you."

The hypochondriacal fancies of the poor man were invincible; and instead of going to Jena he went to Ilmenau, where Goethe secured him a home, and sent him books and money. Having thus seen to his material comforts, he besought him to occupy his mind by writing out the experience of his life, and what he had observed on his travels. In the following letter he refers to his other protégé, Peter Imbaumgarten:

"I am very glad the contract is settled. Your maintenance thus demands a hundred dollars yearly, and I will guarantee the twenty-five dollars quarterly, and contrive also that by the end of this month you shall receive a regular allowance for pocket money. I will also send what I can *in natura*, such as paper, pens, sealing-wax, &c. Meanwhile here are some books.

"Thanks for your news; continue them. The wish to do good is a bold, proud wish; we must be thankful when we can secure even a little bit. I have now a proposition to make. When you are in your new quarters I wish you would pay some attention to a boy, whose education I have undertaken, and who learns the huntsman's craft in Ilmenau. He has begun French; could you not assist him in it? He draws nicely; could you not keep him to it? I would fix the hours when he should come to you. You would lighten my anxiety about him if you could by friendly intercourse ascertain the

condition of his mind, and inform me of it; and if you could keep an eye upon his progress. But of course this depends on your feeling disposed to undertake such a task. Judging from myself—*intercourse with children always makes me feel young and happy.* On hearing your answer, I will write more particulars. *You will do me a real service, and I shall be able to add monthly the trifle which I have set aside for the boy's education.* I trust I shall still be able to lighten your sad condition, so that you may recover your cheerfulness."

Let me call attention to the delicacy with which he here intimates that he does not mean to occupy Kraft's [1] time without remunerating it. If that passage be thoroughly considered it will speak as much for the exquisite kindness of Goethe's nature as any greater act of liberality. Few persons would have considered themselves unentitled to *ask* such a service from one whose existence they had secured. To pay for it would scarcely have entered their thoughts. But Goethe felt that to demand a service, which might be irksome, would, in a certain way, be selling benevolence; if he employed Kraft's time, it was right that he should pay what he would have paid another master. On the other hand, he instinctively shrunk from the indelicacy of making a decided *bargain.* It was necessary to intimate that the lessons would be paid for; but with that intimation he also conveyed the idea that in undertaking such a task Kraft would be conferring an *obligation* upon him; so that Kraft might show his gratitude, might benefit his benefactor, and nevertheless be benefited. After reading such a sentence, I could, to use Wieland's expression, "have eaten Goethe for love!"

Kraft accepted the charge; and Goethe having sent him some linen for shirts, some cloth for a coat, and begged him to write without the least misgiving, now sends this letter:

"Many thanks for your care of Peter; the boy greatly interests me, for he is a legacy of the unfortunate *Lindau.* Do him all the good you can quietly. How you may advance him! I care not whether he reads, draws, or learns French, so that he does occupy his time, and I hear your opinion of him. For the present, let him consider his first object is to acquire the huntsman's craft, and try to learn from him how he likes it, and how he gets on with it. For, believe me, man must have a trade which will support him. The artist is never

[1] Herr Kraft was the *assumed* name of this still anonymous protégé.

paid; it is the artisan. Chodowiecki, the artist whom we admire, would eat but scanty mouthfuls; but Chodowiecki, the artisan, who with his woodcuts illumines the most miserable daubs, he is paid."

In a subsequent letter he says: "Many thanks. By your attention to these things, and your care of Peter, you have performed true service for me, and richly repaid all that I may have been able to do for you. Be under no anxiety about the future, there will certainly occur opportunities wherein you can be useful to me; meanwhile, continue as heretofore." This was written on the *very day* of his return to Weimar from the Swiss journey! If this tells us of his attention to his protégé, the next letter tells us of his anticipating even the casualty of death, for he had put Kraft on the list of those whom he left as legacies of benevolence to his friends. It should be remarked that Goethe seems to have preserved profound secrecy with respect to the good he was then doing; not even in his confidential letters to Frau von Stein is there one hint of Kraft's existence. In short, *nothing* is wanting to complete the circle of genuine benevolence.

The year 1781 began with an increase of Kraft's pension; or rather, instead of paying a hundred dollars for his board and lodging, and allowing him pocket money, he made the sum two hundred dollars. "I can spare as much as that; and you need not be anxious about every trifle, but can lay out your money as you please. Adieu; and let me soon hear that all your sorrows have left you." This advance seems to have elicited a demand for *more* money, which produced the following characteristic answer:

"You have done well to disclose the whole condition of your mind to me; I can make all allowances, little as I may be able to completely calm you. My own affairs will not permit me to promise you a farthing more than the two hundred dollars, unless I were to get into debt, which in my place would be very unseemly. This sum you shall receive regularly. Try to make it do.

"I certainly do not suppose that you will change your place of residence without my knowledge and consent. Every man has his duty, make a duty of your love to me and you will find light.

"It would be very disagreeable to me if you were to *borrow* from any one. It is precisely this miserable unrest now troubling you which has been the misfortune of your whole

life, and you have never been more contented with a thousa dollars than you now are with two hundred; because y always still desired something which you had not, and ha never accustomed your soul to accept the limits of necessi I do not reproach you with it; I know, unhappily too we how it pertains to you, and feel how painful must be the co trast between your present and your past. But enough! O word for a thousand: at the end of every quarter you sh receive fifty dollars; for the present an advance shall be mad Limit your wants: the *Must* is hard, and yet solely by th *Must* can we show how it is with us in our inner man. live according to caprice requires no peculiar powers." [1]

The following explains itself:

"If you once more read over my last letter you will s plainly that you have misinterpreted it. You are neither *fall in my esteem*, nor have I a *bad opinion* of you, neither have suffered my *good opinion* to be led astray, nor has your mo of thinking become *damaged* in my eyes: all these are exagg rated expressions, such as a rational man should not perm himself. Because I also speak out my thoughts with *freedo* because I wish certain traits in your conduct and views som what different, does that mean that I look on you as a *b man*, and that I wish to discontinue our relations?

"It is these hypochondriacal, weak and exaggerated notio such as your last letter contains, which I blame and regret. it proper that you should say to me: *I am to prescribe the to in which all your future letters must be written?* Does o command an honourable, rational man such things as tha Is it ingenuous in you on such an occasion to *underline* t words that you eat *my bread?* Is it becoming in a mo being, when one gently blames him, or names something him as a malady, to fly out as if one had pulled the hou about his ears? Do not misconstrue me, therefore, if I wi to see you contented and satisfied with the little I can do you. So, if you will, things shall remain just as they were; all events I shall not change my behaviour towards you."

The unhappy man seems to have been brought to a sen of his injustice by this, for although there is but one mo letter, bearing the date 1783, that is, two years subsequent the one just given, the connection lasted for seven yea

[1] I will give the original of this fine saying, as I have rendered it clumsily: Das *Muss* ist hart, aber beim *Muss* kann der Mensch allein zei wie's inwendig mit ihm steht. Willkürlich leben kann jeder.

When Goethe undertook to write the life of Duke Bernhard he employed Kraft to make extracts for him from the Archives; which extracts, Luden, when he came to look over them with a biographical purpose, found utterly worthless.[1] The last words we find of Goethe's addressed to Kraft are, "You have already been of service to me, and other opportunities will offer. I have no grace to dispense, and my favour is not so fickle. Farewell, and enjoy your little in peace." It was terminated only by the death of the poor creature in 1785. Goethe buried him at his own expense, but even to the Jena officials he did not disclose Kraft's real name.[2]

To my apprehension these letters reveal a nature so exquisite in far-thoughted tenderness, so true and human in its sympathies with suffering, and so ready to alleviate suffering by sacrifices rarely made to friends, much less to strangers, that, after reading them, the epithets of "cold" and "heartless," often applied to Goethe, sound like blasphemies against the noblest feelings of humanity. Observe, this Kraft was no romantic object appealing to the sensibility; he had no thrilling story to stimulate sympathy; there was no subscription list opened for him; there were no coteries weeping over his misfortunes. Unknown, unfriended, ill at ease with himself and with the world, he revealed his wretchedness in secret to the great poet, and in secret that poet pressed his hand, dried his eyes, and ministered to his wants. And he did this not as *one* act, not as one passing impulse, but as the sustained sympathy of seven years.

Pitiful and pathetic is the thought that such a man can, for so many years, both in his own country and in ours, have been reproached, nay, even vituperated as cold and heartless! A certain reserve and stiffness of manner, a certain soberness of old age, a want of political enthusiasm, and some sentences wrenched from their true meaning, are the evidences whereon men build the strange hypothesis that he was an Olympian who sitting *above* Humanity, *seeing* life but not *feeling* it, his heart dead to all noble impulses, his career a calculated egotism. How it was that one so heartless became the greatest poet of modern times—how it was that he whose works contained the widest compass of human life, should himself be a bloodless pulseless diplomatist—no one thought

[1] See LUDEN'S *Rückblicke in Mein Leben.*

[2] I learn this from a letter to the Judge at Jena, which was exhibited at the *Goethe Austellung* in Berlin, 1861.

of explaining, till Menzel arose, and with unparalleled effronte maintained that Goethe had no genius, but only talent, an that the miracle of his works lies in their style—a certa adroitness in representation. Menzel is a man so complete rejected by England—the translation of his work met wi such hopeless want of encouragement, that I am perha wrong to waste a line upon it; but the bold style in which h trenchant accusations are made, and the assumption of certain manliness as the momentum to his sarcasms, ha given his attacks on Goethe a circulation independent of h book. To me he appears radically incompetent to apprecia a poet. I should as soon think of asking the first stalwa Kentish farmer for his opinion on the Parthenon. Th farmer would doubtless utter some energetic sentences e pressing his sense of its triviality; but the coarse energy his language would not supply the place of knowledge, feelin and taste; nor does the coarse energy of Menzel's style supp those deficiencies of nature and education which incapacita him for the perception of Art.

The paradox still remains, then, in spite of Menzel: a gre poet destitute of the feelings which poetry incarnates—a ma destitute of soul giving expression to all the emotions he h not—a man who wrote *Werther*, *Egmont*, *Faust*, *Herman u Dorothea*, and *Meister*, yet knew not the joys and sorrows his kind; will any one defend that paradox?[1] Not only th paradox, but this still more inexplicable one, that all who kne Goethe, whether they were his peers or his servants, loved hi only as lovable natures can be loved. Children, wome clerks, professors, poets, princes—all loved him. Even Herde bitter against every one, spoke of him with a reverence whi astonished Schiller, who writes: "He is by many besid Herder named with a species of devotion, and *still more lov as a man* than admired as an author. Herder says he has clear, universal mind, the truest and deepest feeling, and t greatest purity of heart."[2] Men might learn so much fro his works, had not the notion of his coldness and indifferen disturbed their judgment. "In no line," says Carlyle, "do he speak with asperity of any man, scarcely of anything. H

[1] I remember once, as we were walking along Piccadilly, talking about t infamous *Büchlein von Goethe*, Carlyle stopped suddenly, and with his pecul look and emphasis, said, "Yes, it is the wild cry of amazement on the part all spooneys that the Titan was not a spooney too! Here is a god-like intelle and yet you see he is not an idiot! Not in the least a spooney!"

[2] *Briefw. mit Körner*, i. p. 136.

knows the good and loves it; he knows the bad and hateful and rejects it; but in neither case with violence. His love is calm and active; his rejection implied rather than pronounced."

And Schiller, when he came to appreciate by daily intercourse the qualities of his great friend, thus wrote of him: "It is not the greatness of his intellect which binds me to him. If he were not as a man more admirable than any I have ever known, I should only marvel at his genius from the distance. But I can truly say that in the six years I have lived with him, I have never for one moment been deceived in his character. He has a high truth and integrity, and is thoroughly in earnest for the Right and the Good; hence all hypocrites and phrase-makers are uncomfortable in his presence." And the man of whom Schiller could think thus is believed by many to have been a selfish egotist, "wanting in the higher moral feelings"!

But so it is in life: a rumour, originating perhaps in thoughtless ignorance, and circulated by malice, gains credence in the face of probability, and then no amount of evidence suffices to dissipate it. There is an atmosphere round certain names, a halo of glory or a halo of infamy, and men perceive this halo without seeking to ascertain its origin. Every public man is in some respects mythical; and the fables are believed in spite of all the contradictions of evidence. It is useless to hope that men will pause to inquire into the truth of what they hear said of another, before accepting and repeating it; but with respect to Goethe, who has now been more than a quarter of a century in his grave, one may hope that evidence so strong as these pages furnish may be held more worthy of credence than anything which gossip or ignorance, misconception or partisanship has put forth without proof.

BOOK THE FIFTH

1779 TO 1793

"Wenn sich der Most auch ganz absurd gebärdet,
Es giebt zuletzt doch noch 'nen Wein."

"Von jener Macht, die alle Wesen bindet
Befreit der Mensch sich der sich überwindet."

"Postquam me experientia docuit, omnia, quæ in communi vita frequent occurrunt, vana et futilia esse; quum viderem omnia, a quibus et quæ tim bam, nihil neque boni neque mali in se habere, nisi quatenus ab iis animv movebatur: constitui tandem inquirere, an aliquid daretur quod verum bonu et sui communicabile esset, et a quo solo rejectis ceteris omnibus animus affic retur; imo an aliquid daretur, quo invento et acquisito continua ac summa æternum fruerer lætitia."—SPINOSA.

CHAPTER I

NEW BIRTH

THE changes slowly determining the evolution of characte when from the lawlessness of Youth it passes into the cle stability of Manhood, resemble the evolution of harmony in th tuning of an orchestra, when from stormy discords wandering i pursuit of concord, all the instruments gradually subside int the true key: round a small centre the hurrying sounds revolv one by one falling into that centre, and increasing its circle, first slowly, and afterwards with ever-accelerated velocity, ti victorious concord emerges from the tumult. Or they may b likened to the gathering splendour of the dawn, as at fir slowly, and afterwards with silent velocity, it drives the sulle darkness to the rear, and with a tidal sweep of light take tranquil possession of the sky. Images such as these repr sent the dawn of a new epoch in Goethe's life; an epoch whe the wanderings of an excitable nature are gradually fallin more and more within the circle of law; when aims, befo vague, now become clear; when in the recesses of his min much that was fluent becomes crystallised by the earnestne which gives a definite purpose to his life. All men of geni go through this process of crystallisation. Their youths a disturbed by the turbulence of errors and of passions; if the

outlive these errors they convert them into advantages. Just as the sides of great mountain ridges are rent by fissures filled with molten rock, which fissures, when the lava cools, act like vast supporting ribs strengthening the mountain mass, so, in men of genius, passions first rend, and afterwards buttress life. The diamond, it is said, can only be polished by its own dust; is not this symbolical of the truth that only by its own fallings-off can genius properly be taught? And is not our very walk, as Goethe says, a series of falls?

He was now (1779) entering his thirtieth year. Life slowly emerged from the visionary mists through which hitherto it had been seen; the solemn earnestness of manhood took the place of the vanishing thoughtlessness of youth, and gave a more commanding unity to his existence. He had "resolved to deal with Life no longer by halves, but to work it out in its totality, beauty, and goodness—*vom Halben zu entwöhnen, und im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen, resolut zu leben.*" It is usually said that the residence in Italy was the cause of this change; but the development of his genius was the real cause. The slightest acquaintance with the period we are now considering suffices to prove that long before he went to Italy the change had taken place. An entry in his Diary at this date is very significant. "Put my things in order, looked through my papers, and burnt all the old chips. Other times, other cares! Calm retrospect of Life, and the extravagances, impulses, and eager desires of youth; how they seek satisfaction in all directions. How I have found delight, especially in mysteries, in dark imaginative connections; how I only half seized hold of Science, and then let it slip; how a sort of modest self-complacency runs through all I wrote; how short-sighted I was in divine and human things; how many days wasted in sentiments and shadowy passions; how little good I have drawn from them, and now the half of life is over, I find myself advanced no step on my way, but stand here as one who, escaped from the waves, begins to dry himself in the sun. The period in which I have mingled with the world since October 1775, I dare not yet trust myself to look at. God help me further, and give me light, that I may not so much stand in my own way, but see to do from morning till evening the work which lies before me, and obtain a clear conception of the order of things; that I be not as those are who spend the day in complaining of headache, and the night in drinking the wine which gives the headache!"

There is something quite solemn in those words. The sam thought is expressed in a letter to Lavater: "The desire t raise the pyramid of my existence, the basis of which is alread laid, as high as practicable in the air, absorbs every oth desire, and scarcely ever quits me. I dare not longer delay I am already advanced in life, and perhaps Death will brea in at the middle of my work, and leave the Babylonic tow incomplete. At least men shall say it was boldly scheme and if I live, my powers shall, with God's aid, reach the con pletion." And in a recently published letter to the duke, h says: "I let people say what they will, and then I retire int my old fortress of Poetry and work at my *Iphigenia*. By th I am made sensible that I have been treating this heaven gift somewhat too cavalierly, and there is still time and nee for me to become more economical if ever I am to bring fort anything."[1]

No better index of the change can be named than h *Iphigenia auf Tauris*, written at this period. The reader wi learn with some surprise that this wonderful poem was orig nally written in prose. It was the fashion of the day. *Göt Egmont*, *Tasso*, and *Iphigenia*, no less than Schiller's *Robber Fiesco*, *Kabale und Liebe*, were written in prose; and whe *Iphigenia* assumed a poetic form, the Weimar friends we disappointed—they *preferred* the prose.

This was part of the mania for returning to Nature. Vers was pronounced unnatural; although, in truth, verse is n more unnatural than song. Song is to speech what poet is to prose; it expresses a different mental condition. In passioned prose *approaches* poetry in the rhythmic impulse its movements; as impassioned speech in its varied cadenc also approaches the intonations of music. Under great em tional excitement, the Arabs give their language a recognisab metre, and almost talk poetry. But prose never *is* poetry, is so only for a moment; nor is speech song. Schiller learn to see this, and we find him writing to Goethe, "I have nev before been so palpably convinced as in my present occupati how closely in poetry Substance and Form are connecte Since I have began to transform my prosaic language into poetic rhythmical one, I find myself *under a totally differe jurisdiction;* even many motives which in the prosaic executi seemed to me to be perfectly in place, I can no longer us

[1] *Briefwechsel zwischen Karl August und Goethe*, i. 11.

they were merely *good for the common domestic understanding, whose organ prose seems to be;* but verse absolutely demands reference to the imagination, and thus I was obliged to become poetical in many of my motives."

That Goethe should have fallen into the sophism which asserted prose to be more natural than verse is surprising. His mind was full of song. To the last he retained the faculty of singing melodiously, when his prose had degenerated into comparative feebleness. And this prose *Iphigenia* is saturated with verses; which is also the case with *Egmont.* He *meant* to write prose, but his thoughts instinctively expressed themselves in verse. The critical reader will do well to compare the prose with the poetic version.[1] He will not only see how frequent the verses are, but how few were the alterations necessary to be made to transform the prose drama into a poem. They are just the sort of touches which elevate poetry above prose. Thus, to give an example, in the prose he says: *unnütz seyn, ist todt seyn* (to be useless is to be dead), which thus grows into a verse—

Ein unnütz Leben ist ein früher Tod.[1]

Again in the speech of Orestes (Act ii. sc. 1), there is a fine and terrible allusion to Clytemnestra, "Better die here before the altar than in an obscure nook where the nets of murderous near *relatives* are placed." In the prose this allusion is not clear—Orestes simply says, the "nets of assassins."[3]

The alterations do not touch the substance of this drama; we must therefore consider it a product of the period now under review; and as such we may examine it at once.

CHAPTER II

IPHIGENIA

It was very characteristic in Schlegel to call *Iphigenia* "an echo of Greek song"; he delighted in such rhetorical prettinesses; but that German scholars should have so often re-

[1] See vol. xxxiv. of the edition of 1840.
[2] A life not useful is an early death.
[3] Neither Taylor nor Miss Swanwick appears to have seized the allusion. One translates it, "by the *knives of avenging kindred*"; the other, "where *dear hands* have spread *assassination's wily net.*"

peated the phrase, and should have so often without misgivin declared *Iphigenia* to be the finest modern specimen of Gre tragedy, is truly surprising, until we reflect on the mass flagrant traditional errors afloat respecting the Greek dram For a long while the Three Unities were held to be inseparab from that drama; in spite of the fact that in several pla Unity of Time is obviously disregarded, and in two or thr the Unity of Place is equally so. Again there was the notic that Comedy and Tragedy were not suffered to mingle in th same play; in spite of the palpable fact of Æschylus an Euripides having mingled them. It was also believed th Destiny formed the tragic-pivot; in spite of the fact, that the *majority* of these plays Destiny has *no* place, beyond wh the religious conceptions of the poets must of necessity ha given to it, just as Christianity must of necessity underlie th tragic conceptions of Christian poets.

The very phrase with which critics characterise *Iphigenia* sufficient to condemn them. They tell us it has "all th repose of Greek tragedy." Consider it for a moment: *Repo* in a tragedy! that is to say, calmness in the terrific upheavin of volcanic passions. Tragedy, we are told by Aristotle, ac through Terror and Pity, awakening in our bosoms sympath with suffering; and to suppose *this* effect can be accomplishe by the "meditative repose which breathes from every verse is tantamount to supposing a battle-song will most vigorous stir the blood of combatants if it borrow the accents of lullaby.

Insensibly our notions of Greek art are formed from scul ture; and hence, perhaps, this notion of repose. But a quaintance with the drama ought to have prevented such a error, and taught men not to confound calmness of *evolutio* with calmness of *life*. The unagitated simplicity of Gre scenic representation lay in the nature of the scenic necessitie but we do not call the volcano cold, because the snow res on its top. Had the Greek drama been exhibited on stag like those of modern Europe, and performed by actors witho cothurnus and mask, its deep agitations of passion wou have welled up to the surface, communicating responsiv agitations to the form. But there were reasons why this cou not be. In the Grecian drama, everything was on a scale vastness commensurate with the needs of an audience of mar thousands; and consequently everything was disposed masses rather than in details; it thus necessarily assume

something of the sculpturesque form, threw itself into magnificent groupings, and, with a view to its effect, adapted a peculiar eurhythmic construction. It thus assumed slowness of movement, because it could not be rapid without distortion. If the critic doubts this, let him mount on stilts and, bawling through a speaking-trumpet, try what he can make of Shakspeare; he will then have an approximative idea of the restraints laid upon the Grecian actor, who, clothed so as to aggrandise his person, and speaking through a resonant mask, which had a *fixed* expression, could not *act*, in our modern sense of the word, but could only declaim; he had no means of representing the *fluctuations* of passion, and the poet therefore was forced to make him represent passion in broad, fixed masses. Hence the movement of the Greek drama was necessarily large, slow, and simple.

But if we pierce beneath scenic necessities and attend solely to the dramatic life which pulses through the Grecian tragedies, what sort of calmness meets us there? Calmness is a relative word. Polyphemus hurling rocks as school-boys throw cherry-stones, would doubtless smile at our riots, as we smile at buzzing flies; and Moloch howling through the unfathomable wilderness in passionate repentance of his fall, would envy us the wildest of our despair, and call it calmness. But measured by human standards I know not whose sorrow "can bear such emphasis" as to pronounce those pulses calm which throb in the *Œdipus*, the *Agamemnon*, or the *Ajax*. The Labdacidan Tale is one of the sombrest threads woven by the Parcæ.

The subject selected by the Greek dramatists are almost uniformly such as to call into play the darkest passions: madness, adultery, and murder in *Agamemnon;* revenge, murder, and matricide in the *Choëphoræ;* incest in *Œdipus;* jealousy and infanticide in *Medea;* incestuous adultery in *Hippolytus;* madness in *Ajax;* and so on throughout the series. The currents of these passions are for ever kept in agitation, and the alternations of pity and terror close only with the closing of the scene. In other words, in spite of the slowness of its scenic presentation this drama is distinguished by the very absence of the repose which is pronounced its characteristic.

Here we meet with the first profound difference separating Goethe from the Greek dramatist. The repose which was forced upon the Greek, which formed one of his restraints, as the hardness of the marble restrains the sculptor, Goethe has adopted under conditions which did *not* force him; while the

repose, which the Greek kept only at the surface, Goethe ha allowed to settle down to the core. In what was accidenta temporal, he has imitated Greek Art; in the one essentia characteristic he has not imitated it. Racine, so unjustl treated by Schlegel, *has* given us the passionate life of th Greek Drama, in spite of his *Madame* Hermione and *Monsieu* Oreste; in imitating the slow scenic movement he has als imitated the dramatic agitation of the under-current.

Goethe's *Iphigenia*, then, we must cease to regard accordin to the Grecian standard. It is a German play. It substitute profound moral struggles, for the passionate struggles of th old legend. It is not Greek in ideas nor in sentiment. It i German, and transports Germany of the eighteenth centur into Scythia during the mythic age, quite as absolutely a Racine places the court of Versailles in the camp of Aulis and with the same ample justification.[1] The points in whic Goethe's work resembles the Greek, are, first, the slowness o its scenic movement and simplicity of its action, which produc a corresponding calmness in the dialogue; and secondly, saturation of mythic lore. All the rest is German. And thi Schiller, as a dramatist, clearly saw. "I am astonished," h says, "to find this piece no longer makes the same favourabl impression on me that it did formerly; though I still recognis it as a work full of soul. *It is, however, so astonishingly moder and un-Greek that I cannot understand how it was ever thoug to resemble a Greek play.* It is purely moral, but the *sensuou power, the life, the agitation, and everything which specifical belongs to a dramatic work is wanting.* Goethe has himse spoken slightingly of it, but I took that as a mere caprice o coquetry; now I understand him."

Schiller adds, however, that apart from the dramatic form *Iphigenia* is a marvellous production, which must for eve remain the delight and wonderment of mankind. This striking the right chord. A drama it is not; it is a marvellou dramatic poem. The grand and solemn movement of i evolution responds to the large and simple ideas which unfolds. It has the calmness of majesty. In the limpi clearness of its language, the involved mental processes of th

[1] This error of local colouring, which critics more erudite than acute ha ridiculed in Racine, is not only an error commanded by the very conditio of Art, but is the very error committed by the Greeks themselves. In th play of *Iphigenia*, Euripides has committed anachronisms as gross as a chargeable to Racine; and justly: he wrote for the audience of his day, did not write for antiquity.

characters are as transparent as the operations of bees within a crystal hive; while a constant strain of high and lofty music makes the reader feel as if in a holy temple. And above all witcheries of detail there is the one capital witchery, belonging to Greek statues more than to any other works of human cunning—the perfect unity of impression produced by the whole, so that nothing in it seems *made*, but all to *grow*, nothing is superfluous, but all is in organic dependence, nothing is there for detached effect, but the whole is effect. The poem fills the mind; beautiful as the separate passages are, admirers seldom think of passages, they think of the wondrous whole.

I cannot in language less than hyperbolical express my admiration for this work considered in itself; as a drama, I think an instructive parallel might be drawn between it and the *Iphigeneia* of Euripides. The enormous superiority of Goethe in intellectual stature, even aided by the immeasurable advantage he has of writing in a language which is in some sort our own, would not cover his inferiority as a dramatist.

In Euripides we have this groundwork: Iphigenia, about to be sacrificed at Aulis, was snatched away in a cloud by Diana, and a hind substituted in her place; she is now priestess of Diana in Tauris, where she presides over the bloody sacrifice of every stranger thrown on the inhospitable shores. Orestes and Pylades, in obedience to the oracle, come to Tauris intent on bearing away the Image of Diana: that accomplished, Orestes is to be released from the Furies who pursue him. The two are seized, and brought to Iphigenia for sacrifice. A recognition takes place; and she aids them in their original design of carrying away the goddess. They are pursued by the Scythians, but Minerva appears, to cut the knot and calm the rage of Thoas.

This story Goethe has modernised. The characters are essentially different, the moral elements are different, and the effect is different. His Iphigenia, every way superior to the Greek priestess, has the high, noble, tender, delicate soul of a Christian maiden. Forced to fulfil the duties of a Priestess, she subdues by her mild influence the fierce prejudice of Thoas, and makes him discontinue the barbarous practice of human sacrifices. She, who herself had been anointed as a sacrifice, could she preside over the sacrifice of another? This sympathy is modern. No Greek would have suffered her own personal feelings thus to rise up in rebellion against a

religious rite. The key note is struck here, and this tone sounds through the whole piece.

Iphigenia is melancholy, and pines for her native shores, in spite of the honour which attends, and the good she effects by her influence on Thoas. The fate of her family perturbs her. Thoas has conceived a passion for her.

> Thou sharedst my sorrow when a hostile sword
> Tore from my side my last, my dearest son;
> *Long as fierce vengeance occupied my heart,*
> *I did not feel my dwellings' dreary void;*
> But now, returning home, my rage appeased,
> My foes defeated and my son avenged,
> I find there's nothing left to comfort me.[1]

And he expresses a hope to "bear her to his dwelling as a bride," which she gently evades; he then taxes her with the mystery in which she has shrouded herself. She answers—

> If I concealed, O king, my name and race,
> 'Twas fear which prompted me, and not mistrust;
> For didst thou know who stands before thee now,
> And what accursed head thy arm protects,
> A shuddering horror would possess thy heart;
> And, far from wishing me to share thy throne,
> Wouldst banish me perchance.

Thoas replies, with generosity, that nothing shall make him cease his protection.

> In my hands
> The goddess placed thee; thou hast been to me
> As sacred as to her, and her behest
> Shall for the future also be my law.
> If thou canst hope in safety to return
> Back to thy kindred, I renounce my claims.

This promise becomes an important agent in the dénouement and is skilfully contrived. Iphigenia, urged by him to speak out, utters this tremendous line:

> Know: I issue from the race of Tantalus![2]

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[1] In all extracts from this work I avail myself of the translation by Miss SWANWICK (*Selections from Goethe and Schiller*), which is many degrees superior to that of the late WILLIAM TAYLOR (*Survey of German Poetry*, vol. iii.). Feeling, as I profoundly feel, the insuperable difficulties of translating Goethe into English, it would ill become me to criticise Miss Swanwick's version; but it would also be very unjust not to add, that all versions miss the exquisite beauty of the original, and resemble it no more than a rough wood-cut resembles a Titian.

[2] *Vernimm: ich bin aus Tantalus Geschlecht.*
Miss Swanwick, from metrical necessity, has weakened this into:—
"Attend: I issue from the Titan's race."
It was indispensable to preserve the name of Tantalus, so pregnant with terrible suggestion.

Thoas is staggered; but after she has narrated the story of her race, he repeats his offer of marriage, which she will not accept. Irritated by her refusal, he exclaims:

> Be priestess still
> Of the great goddess who selected thee;
> And may she pardon me that I from her
> Unjustly, and with secret self-reproach,
> Her ancient sacrifice so long withheld.
> From olden times no stranger near'd our shore
> But fell a victim at her sacred shrine;
> But thou with kind affection didst enthral me
> That I forgot my duty. Thou didst rock
> My senses in a dream: I did not hear
> My people's murmurs: now they cry aloud,
> Ascribing my poor son's untimely death
> To this my guilt. No longer for thy sake
> Will I oppose the wishes of the crowd
> Who urgently demand the sacrifice.
> . . . . . .
> Two strangers, whom in caverns of the shore
> We found concealed, and whose arrival here
> Bodes to my realm no good, are in my power:
> With them thy goddess may once more resume
> Her ancient, pious, long-suspended rites.

Thus ends the first act.

In the conception of Thoas a great dramatic collision is rendered impossible: so high and generous a nature cannot resist an appeal to his generosity; and thus the spectator foresees there will be no struggle. In Euripides, on the contrary, the fierce Scythian looms from the dark background, terrible as fate; and he is artfully withheld from appearing on the scene until the very last. *How* he is to be appeased no spectator foresees. To be sure he is appeased by a *Deus ex machina*, and not by a dramatic unravelling of the entangled threads; but this inferiority is, dramatically speaking, more than compensated by the effect of the collision, and the agitation kept up to the last. Thoas, in Goethe, is a *moral*, not a *dramatic* figure.[1]

The carelessness to all dramatic effect which weakens this play is seen in the very avoidance of a path Euripides had

[1] The notion of making Thoas in love is not new. LAGRANGE-CHANCEL, In his *Oreste et Pylade* (a real treat to any one with a perception of the ludicrous) has thrown as much "galanterie" into this play as one may find in an opera. Thoas loves Iphigénie, who loves Pylade; but while the tyrant sighs in vain, the truculent Scythian is sighed for by Thomyris, *princesse du sang royal des Scythes*. As a specimen of *couleur locale*, I may mention that Thoas in this play has a *capitaine des gardes* and two *ministres d'état*, with an *ambassadeur Sarmate* resident at his court.

opened, viz., the certainty in the mind of the audience that Orestes and Pylades are the two captives to be slaughtered. In Euripides, Orestes and his companion appear on the scene before they are made prisoners; in Goethe, not till after their capture has been announced. The effect of the announcement in Euripides is powerful, in Goethe it is null.[1]

In the second act Orestes and Pylades appear. The scene between them is very undramatic, but beautiful as a poetic exposition of their mental conditions. Orestes feels—

> It is the path of death that now we tread,
> At every step my soul grows more serene.

But Pylades clings to life, and to his purpose. "Am I not," he says—

> As ever full of courage and of joy?
> And love and courage are the spirit's wings
> Wafting to noble actions.

Orestes. Noble actions?
Time was when fancy painted such before us!
When oft, the game pursuing, on we roam'd
O'er hill and valley: hoping that ere long,
With club and weapon arm'd, we so might chase
The track of robber or of monster huge.
And then at twilight, by the glassy sea,
We peaceful sat reclined against each other;
The waves came dancing to our very feet,
And all before us lay the wide, wide world.
Then on a sudden one would seize his sword,
And future deeds shone round us like the stars
Which gemm'd in countless throngs the vaults of night.

Pylades. Endless, my friend, the projects which the soul
Burns to accomplish. We would every deed
Perform at once as grandly as it shows
After long ages, when from land to land
The poet's swelling song hath rolled it on.
It sounds so lovely what our fathers did,
When in the silent evening shade reclined,
We drink it in with music's melting tones.
And what we do, is as it was to them
Toilsome and incomplete.

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[1] Compare EURIP. v. 264, *sq.* There is one touch in the peasant's narrative which is very significant of that period when gods walked the earth so familiarly with man that every stranger might be taken for a god:

> ἐνταῦθα δισσοὺς εἶδε τις νεανίας
> βουφορβὸς ἡμῶν κἀπεχώρησεν πάλιν
> ἄκροισι δακτύλοισι πορθμεύων ἴχνος,
> ἔλεξε δ' οὐχ ὁρᾶτε· δαίμονές τινες
> θάσσουσιν οἵδε.

"There one of our cowboys espied the two youths, and stepping backward on the points of his toes, retraced his steps, saying, 'Do you not see them? they are gods seated there.'"

Pylades fails to inspire him, however, with the resolution which he feels, and with belief in the probability of their escape from the shameful death, which Orestes accepts so calmly. Pylades has heard from the guards the character of Iphigenia; and congratulates himself on the fact that it is a woman who holds their fates in her hands, for even the best of men

> With horror may familiarise his mind;
> Through custom so transform his character,
> That he at length shall make himself a law
> Of what his very soul at first abhorred.

On some not very intelligible pretext he makes Orestes withdraw, that he may have an interview with Iphigenia; and as she approaches, unbinds his chains, and speaks, he adroitly bursts forth into these words:

> Delicious music! dearly welcome tones
> Of our own language in a foreign land!
> With joy my captive eye once more beholds
> The azure mountains of my native coast.[1]

He then tells her a story something like the real one, but disguising names: the *purpose* of which I do not detect. She inquires after her family, and hears the story of her mother's guilt. Noting her agitation, he asks if she be connected with that family by friendship. She sternly replies:

> Say on: and tell me how the deed was done.

He tells her. All she says is a few brief words, which are terribly significant: when he concludes, she veils herself, and withdraws, saying:

> Enough. Thou soon wilt see me once again.

and the act ends in this very *evasive* manner. The third act opens with the visit of Iphigenia to Orestes, in which she requests him to finish the story that Pylades had already half told; and he does so at some length. Disdaining the

[1] M. PATIN has, I think, mistaken the import of this speech: comparing it with the simple exclamation of Philocletes, he says, "Philoclète n'en savait pas tant, il n'était pas si habile à se rendre compte de ses secrets mouvements: tout ce qu'il pouvait était de s'écrier, 'O douce parole!'" *Études sur les Tragiques Grecs*, iii. p. 323. But Pylades is not expressing *his* sentiments. His ear is not unfamiliar with the accents of his own language—he has just before heard them from Orestes; but by picturing Greece to *her*, he adroitly excites her sympathy for *himself*, a Greek.

guile which had prompted Pylades to conceal their names, he boldly says:

I am Orestes!

Here is a proper *ἀναγνωρισις*,—and naturally, no less than dramatically, it demands a cry from the heart of Iphigenia, who should at once fling herself into her brother's arms, and confess their relationship. Instead of this, she suffers him to continue talking, and to withdraw; she only reveals herself in the next scene! This is more like the dramatic treatment we find in juvenile writers, than what is expected from a great poet. Orestes has a return of his madness. He recovers from it, to feel himself purified by his sister's purity; and Pylades now suggests that they shall bear away the image, and depart together.

It is evident that the tragic situation in this story is the slaughter of a brother by a sister ignorant of a relationship perfectly known to the audience. So far from having developed the tragedy of such a situation, Goethe has scarcely touched upon it, and never once awakened our fears: from first to last we are in no suspense, our emotions are untouched, our curiosity alone is excited to watch the process by which the terrible fate will be escaped. In Euripides, on the contrary, everything conspires to increase the terror of the situation. Iphigenia, formerly so mild that she wept with her victims, now rages like a lioness bereaved of her cubs. She has dreamed that Orestes is dead, and in her desolate condition resolves to wreak her woe on others. Her brother and her friend are brought before her. She questions them as to their names. Orestes refuses to tell her. In a rapid interchange of questions and answers she learns the story of her family; and then offers to save *one* of their lives, on condition that the pardoned carry for her a letter to Argos. Here a contest of generosity ensues, as to who shall accept his life. Pylades is at length prevailed upon. The discovery is thus managed: Pylades, bound by his oath to deliver the letter, suggests this difficulty, viz., that should the boat be upset, or should the letter be lost, how then can he fulfil his promise? Hereupon, to anticipate such an accident, Iphigenia tells him the contents of the letter; and in telling him reveals her name. This produces the natural cry from Orestes, who avows himself, and clasps her in his arms. The dramatic movement of this scene is admirable. From this point the

interest slackens in Euripides, in Goethe it deepens. In the Greek play it is the culmination of passionate interest; for although the stratagem by which Iphigenia contrives to bear away the sacred image would flatter the propensities of the cunning Athenian audience,[1] it must have been, even to them, a delight altogether of a lower kind, addressing lower faculties, than those addressed by the tragic processional grandeur of the earlier portions; whereas in the German play, the hitherto feeble passionate interest now rises in an ascending scale of high *moral* interest, so that the tragedy evolved addresses the conscience rather than the emotions, being less the conflict of passions, than the high conflict with duty.

In the fourth act Iphigenia has to save more than her brother's life; she has to save him from the Furies; this is only to be done by deceit, inasmuch as force is impossible under the circumstances. To a Greek mind nothing could be more satisfactory. The Greek *preferred* deceit to force; but the Christianised conscience revolts from deceit as cowardly and deeply immoral. Accordingly Iphigenia shudders at the falsehood which is forced upon her, and only requires to be reminded by the king's messenger of the constant kindness and considerateness with which Thoas has treated her, to make her pause. When, therefore, Pylades arrives, urging her to flight, she communicates to him her scruples.

Pylades. Him thou dost fly who would have slain thy brother.
Iphig. To me at least he hath been ever kind.
Pylades. What fate commands is not ingratitude.
Iphig. Alas! it still remains ingratitude,—
Necessity alone can justify it.
Pylades. Thee before gods and men it justifies.
Iphig. *But my own heart is still unsatisfied.*
Pylades. Scruples too rigid are a cloak for pride.
Iphig. *I cannot argue, I can only feel.*

How modern all this is! Pylades, with more worldly views, says:

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[1] Comp. EURIPIDES, v. 1157, *sq.* Iphigenia pretends that as the image of the goddess has been stained by the impure hands of the two captives, it must be purified, and for this purpose she intends to cleanse it in the sea, but that must be done in solitude. She then bids Thoas command that every citizen shall remain within doors, carefully avoiding a sight of that which may pollute them—μυσαρὰ γὰρ τὰ τοιάδ' ἐστι:—nay more, with an ingenuity which is almost farcical, she bids Thoas himself remain within the Temple, throwing a veil over his eyes as the captives issue forth, and he is not to consider it at all singular if she is a long while absent. In this way she contrives to escape with the image, having made fools of Thoas and his guards.

Life teaches us
To be less strict with others than ourselves;
Thou'lt learn the lesson too. So wonderful
Is human nature, and its varied ties
Are so involved and complicate, that none
May hope to keep his inmost spirit pure,
And walk without perplexity thro' life.

Here, then, lies the tragedy. Will this soul belie its own high instincts, even for the sake of saving her brother? The alternative is horrible; and after portraying the temptation in all its force, and human frailty in all its tenderness, the poet shows us human grandeur in this fine burst from the unhappy priestess:

Attend, O king!
A secret plot is laid; 'tis vain to ask
Touching the captives; they are gone, and seek
Their comrades, who await them on the shore.
The eldest—he whom madness lately seized,
And who is now recovered—is Orestes,
My brother! and the other, Pylades,
His early friend and faithful confidant.
From Delphi, Phœbus sent them to this shore,
With a divine command to steal away
The image of Diana, and to him
Bear back the sister, promising for this
Redemption to the blood-stained matricide.
I have delivered now into thy hands
The remnants of the house of Tantalus:
Destroy us—if thou darest!

For anything like this we seek in vain throughout the Greek *Iphigenia;* and the mere grandeur of the conception would produce an overpowering effect on the stage, if delivered with adequate depth and dignity.

Had Thoas been represented as a fierce Scythian, or even had he not been hitherto allowed to convince us of his generosity, the "collision" would have been stronger; as it is, we have little faith in his ferocity. He has nearly relented when Orestes rushes in with drawn sword to hasten Iphigenia away, because their design has been discovered. A scene ensues in which Thoas is resolved not to suffer the image of Diana to be borne away; and as to carry it away is the object of Orestes, it must be decided by force of arms. But now a light suddenly breaks in upon Orestes, who reads the oracle in another way. Apollo said—

"Back to Greece the sister bring,
Who in the sanctuary on Tauris' shore
Unwillingly abides; so ends the curse."
To Phœbus' sister we applied the words,
And he referred to *thee.*

It was Iphigenia who was to purify him, and to bear *her* away is to fulfil Apollo's orders. This interpretation loosens the knot. Iphigenia recalls to Thoas his promise that she should depart if ever she could return in safety to her kindred, and he reluctantly says, "Then go!" to which she answers—

> Not so, my king; I cannot part
> Without thy blessing, or in anger from thee.
> Banish us not! the sacred right of guests
> Still let us claim: so not eternally
> Shall we be severed. Honour'd and belov'd,
> As my own father was, art thou by me:
> Farewell! Oh! do not turn away, but give
> One kindly word of parting in return.
> So shall the wind more gently swell our sails,
> And from our eyes with softened anguish flow
> The tears of separation. Fare thee well!
> And graciously extend to me thy hand
> In pledge of ancient friendship.
>
> *Thoas* (*extending his hand*). Fare thee well.

This is a very touching, noble close, and is in exquisite harmony with the whole.

The remarks on this masterpiece have already occupied so much space that I could not, were I disposed, pause to examine the various collateral points of criticism which have been raised in Germany. I will merely allude to the characteristic difference between Ancient and Modern Art exhibited in the treatment of the Furies, which in Euripides are terrible Apparitions, real beings personated by actors; in Goethe they are Phantasms moving across the stage of an unhappy soul, but visible only to the inward eye; in like manner the Greek dénouement is the work of the actual interference of the Goddess in person, whereas the German dénouement is a loosening of the knot by deeper insight into the meaning of the oracle.

CHAPTER III

PROGRESS

In the beginning of 1779 we find Goethe very active in his new official duties. He has accepted the direction of the War Department, which suddenly assumes new importance, owing to the preparations for a war. He is constantly riding about the country, and doing his utmost to alleviate the

condition of the people. "Misery," he says, "becomes a prosaic and familiar to me as my own hearth, but nevertheless I do not let go my idea, and will wrestle with the unknown Angel, even should I halt upon my thigh. No man knows what I do, and with how many foes I fight, to bring forth a little."

Among his undertakings may be noted an organisation of Firemen, then greatly wanted. Fires were not only numerous but were rendered terrible by the want of any systematic service to subdue them. Goethe, who in Frankfurt had rushed into the bewildered crowd, and astonished spectators by his rapid peremptory disposition of their efforts into system—who in Apolda and Ettersburg lent aid and command till his eyebrows were singed and his feet were burned—naturally took it much to heart that no regular service was supplied; and he persuaded the duke to institute one.

On this (his thirtieth) birthday the duke, recognising his official services, raised him to the place of *Geheimrath*. "It is strange and dreamlike," writes the Frankfurt burgher in his new-made honour, "that I in my thirtieth year enter the highest place which a German citizen can reach. *On ne va jamais plus loin que quand on ne sait où l'on va*, said a great climber of this world." If he thought it strange, Weimar thought it scandalous. "The hatred of people here," writes Wieland, "against our Goethe, who has done no one any harm, has grown to such a pitch since he has been made Geheimrath, that it borders on fury." But the duke, if he heard these howls, paid no attention to them. He was more than ever with his friend. They started on the 12th of September on a little journey into Switzerland, in the strictest incognito, and with the lightest of travelling trunks. They touched at Frankfurt, and stayed in the old house in the *Hirschgraben*, where Rath Goethe had the pride of receiving not only his son as Geheimrath, but the prince, his friend and master. Goethe's mother was, as may be imagined, in high spirits—motherly pride and housewifely pride being equally stimulated by the presence of such guests.

From Frankfurt they went to Strasburg. There the recollection of Frederika irresistibly drew him to Sesenheim. In his letter to the Frau von Stein he says: "On the 25th I rode towards Sesenheim, and there found the family as I had left it eight years ago. I was welcomed in the most friendly manner. The second daughter loved me in those days better than

deserved, and more than others to whom I have given so much passion and faith. I was forced to leave her at a moment when it nearly cost her her life; she passed lightly over that episode to tell me what traces still remained of the old illness, and behaved with such exquisite delicacy and generosity from the moment that I stood before her unexpected on the threshold, that I felt quite relieved. I must do her the justice to say that she made not the slightest attempt to rekindle in my bosom the cinders of love. She led me into the arbour, and there we sat down. It was a lovely moonlight, and I inquired after every one and everything. Neighbours had spoken of me not a week ago. I found old songs which I had composed, and a carriage I had painted. We recalled many a pastime of those happy days, and I found myself as vividly conscious of all, as if I had been away only six months. The old people were frank and hearty, and thought me looking younger. I stayed the night there, and departed at dawn, leaving behind me friendly faces; so that I can now think once more of this corner of the world with comfort, and know that they are at peace with me."

There is something very touching in this interview, and in his narrative of it, forwarded to the woman he *now* loves, and who does not repay him with a love like that which he believes he has inspired in Frederika. He finds this charming girl still unmarried, and probably is not a little flattered at the thought that she still cherishes his image to the exclusion of every other. She tells him of Lenz having fallen in love with her, and is silent respecting her own share in that little episode; a silence which all can understand and few will judge harshly; the more so as her feelings towards Lenz were at that time doubtless far from tender. Besides, apart from the romance of meeting with an old lover, there was the pride and charm of thinking what a world-renowned name her lover had achieved. It was no slight thing even to have been jilted by such a man; and she must have felt that he had not behaved to her otherwise than was to have been expected under the circumstances.

On the 26th Goethe rejoined his party, and "in the afternoon I called on Lili, and found the lovely *Grasaffen*[1] with a baby of seven weeks old, her mother standing by. There also I was received with admiration and pleasure. I made

[1] *Grasaffen*, i.e. "green monkey," is Frankfurt slang for "budding miss," and alludes to the old days when he knew Lili.

many inquiries, and to my great delight found the good creatur happily married. Her husband, from what I could learn seems a worthy, sensible fellow, rich, well placed in the world in short, she has everything she needs. He was absent. stayed dinner. After dinner went with the duke to see th cathedral, and in the evening saw Paesiello's beautiful oper *L'Infante di Zamora*. Supped with Lili, and went away i the moonlight. The sweet emotions which accompanied m I cannot describe."

We may read in these two descriptions the difference of th two women, and the difference of his feeling for them. Fro Strasburg he went to Emmendingen, and there visited hi sister's grave. Accompanied by such thoughts as these thre visits must have called up, he entered Switzerland. His *Brief aus der Schweitz*, mainly composed from the letters to th Frau von Stein, will inform the curious reader of the effec these scenes produced on him; we cannot pause here in th narrative to quote from them. Enough if we mention that i Zurich he spent happy hours with Lavater, in communicatio of ideas and feelings; and that on his way home he compose the little opera of *Jery und Bätely*, full of Swiss inspiration In Stuttgart the duke took it into his head to visit the court and as no presentable costume was ready, tailors had to b set in activity to furnish the tourists with the necessary clothes They assisted at the New Year festivities of the Militar Academy, and here for the first time Schiller, then twent years of age, with *The Robbers* in his head, saw the author o *Götz* and *Werther*.

It is probable that among all the figures thronging in th hall and galleries on that imposing occasion, none excited i the young ambitious student so thrilling an effect as that o the great poet, then in all the splendour of manhood, in al the lustre of an immense renown. Why has no artist chose this for an historical picture? The pale, sickly young Schille in the stiff military costume of that day, with pigtail and papil lotes, with a sword by his side, and a three-cornered hat unde his arm, stepping forward to kiss the coat of his sovereig duke, in grateful acknowledgment of the three prizes awarde to him for Medicine, Surgery, and Clinical science; consciou that Goethe was looking on, and could know nothing of th genius which had gained, indeed, trivial medical prizes, bu had failed to gain a prize for German composition. This pal youth and this splendid man were in a few years to becom

noble rivals, and immortal friends; to strive with generous emulation, and the most genuine delight in each other's prowess; presenting such an exemplar of literary friendship as the world has seldom seen. At this moment, although Schiller's eyes were intensely curious about Goethe, he was to the older poet nothing beyond a rather promising medical student.

Karl August on their return to Frankfurt again took up his abode in the Goethe family, paying liberal attention to Frau Aja's good old Rhine wine, and privately sending her a sum of money to compensate for the unusual expenses of his visit. By the 13th January he was in Weimar once more, having spent nearly nine thousand dollars on the journey, including purchases of works of art.

Both were considerably altered to their advantage. In his Diary Goethe writes: "I feel daily that I gain more and more the confidence of people; and God grant that I may deserve it, not in the easy way, but in the way I wish. What I endure from myself and others no one sees. The best is the deep stillness in which I live *vis-à-vis* to the world, and thus win what fire and sword cannot rob me of." He was crystallising slowly; slowly gaining the complete command over himself. "I will be lord over myself. No one who cannot master himself is worthy to rule, and only he *can* rule." But with such a temperament this mastery was not easy; wine and women's tears, he felt, were among his weaknesses:

> Ich könnte viel glücklicher seyn,
> Gäb's nur keinen Wein
> Und keine Weiberthränen.

He could not entirely free himself from either. He was a Rhinelander, accustomed from boyhood upwards to the stimulus of wine; he was a poet, never free from the fascinations of woman. But just as he was never known to lose his head with wine, so also did he never lose himself entirely to a woman: the stimulus never grew into intoxication.

One sees that his passion for the Frau von Stein continues; but it is cooling. It was necessary for him to love some one, but he was loving here in vain, and he begins to settle into a calmer affection. He is also at this time thrown more and more with Corona Schröter; and his participation in the private theatricals is not only an agreeable relaxation from the heavy pressure of official duties, but is giving him materials

for *Wilhelm Meister*, now in progress. "Theatricals," he says, "remain among the few things in which I still have the pleasure of a child and an artist." Herder, who had hitherto held somewhat aloof, now draws closer and closer to him, probably on account of the change which is coming over his way of life. And this intimacy with Herder awakens in him the desire to see Lessing; the projected journey to Wolfenbüttel is arrested, however, by the sad news which now arrives that the great gladiator is at peace: Lessing is dead.

Not without significance is the fact that, coincident with this change in Goethe's life, comes the passionate study of science, a study often before taken up in desultory impatience, but now commencing with that seriousness which is to project it as an active tendency through the remainder of his life. In an unpublished "Essay on Granite," written about this period, he says: "No one acquainted with the charm which the secrets of Nature have for man, will wonder that I have quitted the circle of observations in which I have hitherto been confined, and have thrown myself with passionate delight into this new circle. I stand in no fear of the reproach that it must be a spirit of contradiction which has drawn me from the contemplation and portraiture of the human heart to that of Nature. For it will be allowed that all things are intimately connected, and that the inquiring mind is unwilling to be excluded from anything attainable. And I who have known and suffered from the perpetual agitation of feelings and opinions in myself and in others, delight in the sublime repose which is produced by contact with the great and eloquent silence of Nature." He was trying to find a secure basis for his aims; it was natural he should seek a secure basis for his mind; and with such a mind that basis could only be found in the study of Nature. If it is true, as men of science sometimes declare with a sneer, that Goethe was a poet in science (which does not in the least disprove the fact that he was great in science, and made great discoveries), it is equally true that he was a scientific poet. In a future chapter we shall have to consider what his position in science truly is; for the present we merely indicate the course of his studies. Buffon's wonderful book, *Les Epoques de la Nature* —rendered antiquated now by the progress of geology, but still attractive in its style and noble thoughts—produced a profound impression on him. In Buffon, as in Spinoza, and

later on, in Geoffroy St. Hilaire, he found a mode of looking at Nature which thoroughly coincided with his own, gathering many details into a poetic synthesis. Saussure, whom he had seen at Geneva, led him to study mineralogy; and as his official duties gave him many occasions to mingle with the miners, this study acquired a practical interest, which soon grew into a passion—much to the disgust of Herder, who, with the impatience of one who thought books the chief objects of interest, was constantly mocking him for "bothering himself about stones and cabbages." To these studies must be added anatomy, and in particular osteology, which in early years had also attracted him, when he attained knowledge enough to draw the heads of animals for Lavater's *Physiognomy*. He now goes to Jena to study under Loder, professor of anatomy.[1] For these studies his talent, or want of talent, as a draughtsman, had further to be cultivated. To improve himself he lectures to the young men every week on the skeleton. And thus, amid serious duties and many distractions in the shape of court festivities, balls, masquerades, and theatricals, he found time for the prosecution of many and various studies. He was like Napoleon, a giant-worker, and never so happy as when at work.

Tasso was conceived, and commenced (in prose) at this time, and *Wilhelm Meister* grew under his hands, besides smaller works. But nothing was published. He lived for himself, and the small circle of friends. The public was never thought of. Indeed the public was then jubilant at beerhouses, and scandalised in salons, at the appearance of *The Robbers;* and a certain Küttner, in publishing his *Characters of German Poets and Prose Writers* (1781) could complacently declare that the shouts of praise which intoxicated admirers had once raised for Goethe were now no longer heard. Meanwhile *Egmont* was in progress, and assuming a far different tone from that in which it was originated.

It is unnecessary to follow closely all the details, which letters abundantly furnish, of his life at this period. They will not help us to a nearer understanding of the man, and they would occupy much space. What we observe in them all is, a slow advance to a more serious and decisive plan of existence. On the 27th of May his father dies. On the 1st of June he comes to live in the town of Weimar, as more

[1] Comp. *Brief. zwischen Karl August und Goethe*, i. 25, 26.

consonant with his position and avocations. The Duches Amalia has promised to give him a part of the necessar furniture. He quits his *Gartenhaus* with regret, but make it still his retreat for happy hours. Shortly afterwards th Duchess Amalia demonstrates to him at great length th necessity of his being ennobled; the duke, according t Düntzer, not having dared to break the subject to him. I fact, since he had been for six years at court without a paten of nobility, he may perhaps have felt the "necessity" a somewhat insulting. Nevertheless, I cannot but think tha the Frankfurt citizen soon became reconciled to the *von* befor his name; the more so as he was never remarkable for contempt of worldly rank. Immediately afterwards the Pres dent of the Kammer, von Kalb, was suddenly dismissed fro his post, and Goethe was the substitute, at first merely occup ing the post *ad interim;* but not relinquishing his place in th Privy Council.

More important to us is the relation in which he stands t Karl August, and the Frau von Stein. Whoever reads wit proper attention the letters published in the Stein correspond ence will become aware of a notable change in their relatio about this time (1781–2). The tone, which had grow calmer, now rises again into passionate fervour, and ever note reveals the happy lover. From the absence of her letter and other evidence, it is impossible to assign the cause c this change with any certainty. It may have been tha Corona Schröter made her jealous. It may have been tha she feared to lose him. One is inclined to suspect her c some questionable motive, because it is clear that her conduc to him was not straightforward in the beginning, and, as w shall see, became ungenerous towards the close. Whateve the motive, the fact is indubitable. In his letters may b plainly seen the extraordinary fascination she exercised ove him, the deep and constant devotion he gave her, the thoroug identification of her with all his thoughts and aims. A sen tence or two must suffice here. "O thou best beloved! have had all my life an ideal wish of how I would be loved and have sought in vain its realisation in vanishing dreams and now, when the world daily becomes clearer to me, I fin this realisation in thee, and in a way which can never be lost. Again. "Dearest, what do I not owe thee! If thou dids not also love me so entirely, if thou only hadst me as a frien among others, I should still be bound to dedicate my whol

existence to thee. For could I ever have renounced my errors without thy aid? When could I have looked so clearly at the world, and found myself so happy in it, before this time when I have nothing more to seek in it?" And this: "As a sweet melody raises us to heaven, so is to me thy being and thy love. I move among friends and acquaintances everywhere as if seeking thee; I find thee not, and return into my solitude."

While he was thus happy, thus settling down into clearness, the young duke, not yet having worked through the turbulence of youth, was often in discord with him. In the published correspondence may be read confirmation of what I have elsewhere learned, namely, that although during their first years of intimacy the poet stood on no etiquette in private with his sovereign, and although to the last Karl August continued the brotherly *thou*, and the most affectionate familiarity of address, yet Goethe soon began to perceive that another tone was called for on his part. His letters become singularly formal as he grows older; at times almost unpleasantly so. The duke writes to him as to a friend, and he replies as to a sovereign.

Not that his affection diminished; but as he grew more serious, he grew more attentive to decorum. For the duchess he seems to have had a tender admiration, something of which may be read in *Tasso*. Her noble, dignified, though somewhat inexpressive nature, the greatness of her heart, and delicacy of her mind, would all the more have touched him, because he knew and could sympathise with what was not perfectly happy in her life. He was often the pained witness of little domestic disagreements, and had to remonstrate with the duke on his occasional roughness.

From the letters to the Frau von Stein we gather that Goethe was gradually becoming impatient with Karl August, whose excellent qualities he cherishes while deploring his extravagances. "Enthusiastic as he is for what is good and right, he has, notwithstanding, less pleasure in it than in what is improper; it is wonderful how reasonable he can be, what insight he has, how much he knows; and yet when he sets about anything good, he must needs begin with something foolish. Unhappily, one sees it lies deep in his nature, and that the frog is made for the water even when he has lived some time on land." In the following we see that the "servile courtier" not only remonstrates with the duke, but refuses to accompany him on his journey, having on a previous journey

been irritated by his manners. "Here is an epistle. If you think right, send it to the duke, speak to him and do not spare him. I only want quiet for myself, and for him to know with whom he has to do. *You can tell him also that I have declared to you I will never travel with him again.* Do this in your own prudent gentle way." Accordingly he lets the duke go away alone: but they seem to have come to some understanding subsequently, and the threat was not fulfilled. Two months after, this sentence informs us of the reconciliation: "I have had a long and serious conversation with the duke. In this world, my best one, the dramatic writer has a rich harvest; and the wise say, Judge no man until you have stood in his place." Later on we find him complaining of the duke going wrong in his endeavours to do right. "God knows if he will ever learn that fireworks at midday produce no effect. I don't like always playing the pedagogue and bugbear, and from the others he asks no advice, nor does he ever tell them of his plans." Here is another glimpse: "The duchess is as amiable as possible, the duke is a good creature, and one could heartily love him if he did not trouble the intercourse of life by his manners, and did not make his friends indifferent as to what befalls him by his breakneck recklessness. It is a curious feeling, that of daily contemplating the possibility of our nearest friends breaking their necks, arms, or legs, and yet have grown quite callous to the idea!" Again: "The duke goes to Dresden. He has begged me to go with him, or at least to follow him, but I shall stay here. . . . The preparations for the Dresden journey are quite against my taste. The duke arranges them in his way, *i.e.* not always the best, and disgusts one after the other. I am quite calm, for it is not alterable, and I only rejoice that there is no kingdom for which such cards could be played often."

These are little discordant tones which must have arisen as Goethe grew more serious. The real regard he had for the duke is not injured by these occasional outbreaks. "The duke," he writes, "is guilty of many follies which I willingly forgive, remembering my own." He knows that he can at any moment put his horses to the carriage and drive away from Weimar, and this consciousness of freedom makes him contented; although he now makes up his mind that he is destined by nature to be an author and nothing else. "I have a purer delight than ever, when I have written something which well expresses what I meant . . ." "I am truly

born to be a private man, and do not understand how fate has contrived to throw me into a ministry and into a princely family." As he grows clearer on the true mission of his life, he also grows happier. One can imagine the strange feelings with which he would now take up *Werther,* and for the first time since ten years read this product of his youth. He made some alterations in it, especially in the relation of Albert to Lotte; and introduced the episode of the peasant who commits suicide from jealousy. Schöll, in his notes to the *Stein Correspondence,*[1] has called attention to a point worthy of notice, viz., that Herder, who helped Goethe in the revision of this work, had pointed out to him the very same fault in its composition which Napoleon two-and-twenty years later laid his finger on; the fault, namely, of making Werther's suicide partly the consequence of frustrated ambition and partly of unrequited love—a fault which, in spite of Herder and Napoleon, in spite also of Goethe's acquiescence, I venture to think no fault at all, as will be seen when the interview with Napoleon is narrated.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATIONS FOR ITALY

With the year 1783 we see him more and more seriously occupied. He has ceased to be "the Grand Master of all the Apes," and is deep in old books and archives. The birth of a crown prince came to fill Weimar with joy, and give the duke a sudden seriousness. The baptism, which took place on the 5th of February, was a great event in Weimar. Herder preached "like a God," said Wieland, whose cantata was sung on the occasion. Processions by torchlight, festivities of all kinds, poems from every poet, *except* Goethe, testified the people's joy. There is something very generous in this silence. It could not be attributed to want of affection. But he who had been ever ready with ballet, opera, or poem, to honour the birthday of the two duchesses, must have felt that now, when all the other Weimar writers were pouring in their offerings, he ought not to throw the weight of his position in

[1] Vol. iii. p. 268.

the scale against them. Had his poem been the worst of th offerings, it would have been prized the highest because i was his.

The duke, proud in his paternity, writes to Merck: "Yo have reason to rejoice with me; for if there be any good dis positions in me they have hitherto wanted a fixed point, bu now there is a firm hook upon which I can hang my picture With the help of Goethe and good luck I will so paint that possible the next generation shall say, he too was a painter! And from this time forward there seems to have been decisive change in him; though he does complain of th "taciturnity of his *Herr Kammerpräsident*" (Goethe), who i only to be drawn out by the present of an engraving. In trut this *Kammerpräsident* is very much oppressed with work, an lives in great seclusion, happy in love, active in study. Th official duties which formerly he undertook so gaily, ar obviously becoming burdens to him, the more so now hi mission rises into greater distinctness. The old desire fc Italy begins to torment him. "The happiest thing is, that can now say I am on the right path, and from this tim forward nothing will be lost."

In his poem *Ilmenau,* written in this year, Goethe vividl depicts the character of the duke, and the certainty of hi metamorphosis. Having seen how he speaks of the duke i his letters to the Frau von Stein, it will gratify the reade to observe that these criticisms were no "behind the back carpings, but were explicitly expressed even in poetry. "Th poem of Ilmenau," Goethe said to Eckermann, "contains i the form of an episode an epoch which in 1783 when I wrot it, had happened some years before; so that I could describ myself historically and hold a conversation with myself c former years. There occurs in it a night scene after one c the breakneck chases in the mountain. We had built ou selves at the foot of a rock some little huts, and covered ther with fir branches, that we might pass the night on dry ground Before the huts we burned several fires and cooked our game Knebel, whose pipe was never cold, sat next to the fire, an enlivened the company with his jokes, while the wine passe freely. Seckendorf had stretched himself against a tree, an was humming all sorts of poetics. On one side lay the duk in deep slumber. I myself sat before him in the glimmerin light of the coals, absorbed in various grave thoughts, sufferin for the mischief which my writings had produced." The sketc

of the duke is somewhat thus to be translated: "Who can tell the caterpillar creeping on the branch, of what its future food will be? Who can help the grub upon the earth to burst its shell? The time comes when it presses out and hurries winged into the bosom of the rose. Thus will the years bring *him* also the right direction of his strength. As yet, beside the deep desire for the True, he has a passion for Error. Temerity lures him too far, no rock is too steep, no path too narrow, peril lies at his side threatening. Then the wild unruly impulse hurries him to and fro, and from restless activity, he restlessly tries repose. Gloomily wild in happy days, free without being happy, he sleeps, fatigued in body and soul, upon a rocky couch."

While we are at Ilmenau let us not forget the exquisite little poems written there this September, with a pencil, on the wall of that hut on the Gickelhahn, which is still shown to visitors:

Ueber allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch;
Die Vögelein schweigen in Walde;
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch.

He had many unpleasant hours as Controller of the Finances, striving in vain to make the duke keep within a prescribed definite sum for expenses; a thing always found next to impossible with princes (not often possible with private men), and by no means accordant with our duke's temperament. "Goethe contrives to make the most sensible representations," Wieland writes to Merck, "and is indeed *l'honnête homme à la cour;* but suffers terribly in body and soul from the burdens which for our good he has taken on himself. It sometimes pains me to the heart to see how good a face he puts on while sorrow like an inward worm is silently gnawing him. He takes care of his health as well as he can, and indeed he has need of it." Reports of this seem to have reached the ear of his mother, and thus he endeavours to reassure her: "You have never known me strong in stomach and head; and that one must be serious with serious matters is in the nature of things, especially when one is thoughtful and desires the good and true. . . . I am, after my manner, tolerably well, am able to do all my work, to enjoy the intercourse of good

friends, and still find time enough for all my favourite pursuits. I could not wish myself in a better place, now that I know the world and know how it looks behind the mountains. And you, on your side, content yourself with my existence, and should I quit the world before you, I have not lived to your shame; I leave behind me a good name and good friends, and thus you will have the consolation of knowing that I *am not entirely dead.* Meanwhile live in peace; fate may yet give us a pleasant old age, which we will also live through gratefully."

It is impossible not to read, beneath these assurances, a tone of sadness such as corresponds with Wieland's intimation. Indeed, the duke, anxious about his health, had urged him in the September of this year to make a little journey in the Harz. He went, accompanied by Fritz von Stein, the eldest son of his beloved, a boy of ten years of age, whom he loved and treated as a son. "Infinite was the love and care he showed me," said Stein, when recording those happy days. He had him for months living under the same roof, taught him, played with him, formed him. His instinctive delight in children was sharpened by his love for this child's mother. A pretty episode in the many-coloured Weimar life, is this of the care-worn minister and occupied student snatching some of the joys of paternity from circumstances which had denied him wife and children.

The Harz journey restored his health and spirits: especially agreeable to him was his intercourse with Sömmering, the great anatomist, and other men of science. He returned to Weimar to continue *Wilhelm Meister*, which was now in its fourth book; to continue his official duties; to see more and more of Herder, then writing his *Ideen;* and to sun himself in the smiles of his beloved.

The year 1784 begins with an alteration in the theatrical world. The Amateur Theatre, which has hitherto given them so much occupation and delight, is now closed. A regular troupe is engaged. For the birthday of the duchess, Goethe prepares the *Planet Dance*, a masked procession; and prepares an oration for the reopening of the Ilmenau mines, which must greatly have pleased him as the beginning of the fulfilment of an old wish. From his first arrival he had occupied himself with these mines, and the possibility of their being once more set working. After many difficulties, on the 24th of February this wish was realised. It is related of him

that on the occasion of this opening speech, made in presence of all the influential persons of the environs, he appeared to have well in his head all that he had written, for he spoke with remarkable fluency. All at once the thread was lost; he seemed to have forgotten what he had to say. "This," says the narrator, "would have thrown any one else into great embarrassment; but it was not so with him. On the contrary, he looked for at least ten minutes steadily and quietly round the circle of his numerous audience; they were so impressed by his personal appearance, that during the very long and almost ridiculous pause every one remained perfectly quiet. At last he appeared to have again become master of his subject; he went on with his speech, and without hesitation continued it to the end as serenely as if nothing had happened."

His osteological studies brought him this year the discovery of an intermaxillary bone in man, as well as in animals.[1] In a future chapter[2] this discovery will be placed in its historical and anatomical light; what we have at present to do with it, is to recognise its biographical significance. Until this discovery was made, the position of man had always been separated from that of even the highest animals, by the fact (assumed) that he had *no* intermaxillary bone. Goethe, who everywhere sought unity in Nature, believed that such a difference did not exist; his researches proved him to be right. Herder was at that time engaged in proving that no structural difference could be found between men and animals; and Goethe, in sending Knebel his discovery, says that it will support this view. "Indeed, man is most intimately allied to animals. The co-ordination of the Whole makes every creature to be that which it is, and man is as much man through the form of his upper jaw, as through the form and nature of the last joint of his little toe. And thus is every creature but *a note of the great harmony*, which must be studied in the Whole, or else it is nothing but a dead letter. From this point of view I have written the little essay, and that is properly speaking the interest which lies hidden in it."

1 He thus announces it to Herder, March 27, 1784: "I hasten to tell you of the fortune that has befallen me. I have found neither gold nor silver, but that which gives me inexpressible joy, the *os intermaxillare* in Man! I compared the skulls of men and beasts, in company with Loder, came on the trace of it, and see there it is!"—*Aus Herder's Nachlass*, i. 75.

2 See further on the chapter on *The Poet as a Man of Science.*

The discovery is significant therefore as an indication of hi tendency to regard Nature in her unity. It was the prelud to his discoveries of the metamorphosis of plants, and of th vertebral theory of the skull: all three resting on the sam mode of conceiving Nature. His botanical studies receive fresh impulse at this period. Linnæus was a constant com panion on his journeys, and we see him with eagerness availin himself of all that the observations and collections of botanist could offer him in aid of his own. "My geological specula tions," he writes to the Frau von Stein, "make progress. see much more than the others who accompany me, becaus I have discovered certain fundamental laws of formation which I keep secret, and can from them better observe an judge the phenomena before me . . . ." "Every one ex claims about my solitude, which is a riddle, because no on knows with what glorious unseen beings I hold communion." It is interesting to observe his delight at seeing a zebra— which was a novelty in Germany—and his inexhaustible pleasure in the elephant's skull, which he has procured fo study. Men confined to their libraries, whose thought scarcely venture beyond the circle of literature, have spoke with sarcasm, and with pity, of this waste of time. But— dead bones for dead bones—there is as much poetry in th study of an elephant's skull, as in the study of those skeleton of the past—history and classics. All depends upon the min of the student; to one man a few old bones will awake thoughts of the great organic processes of nature, thought as far-reaching and sublime as those which the fragments o the past awaken in the historical mind. Impressed with thi conviction, the great Bossuet left the brilliant court of Loui XIV. to shut himself up in the anatomical theatre of Duverney that he might master the secrets of organisation before writin his treatise *De la Connaissance de Dieu*.[1] But there are minds and these form the majority, to whom dry bones are dr bones, and nothing more. "How legible the book of Natur becomes to me," Goethe writes, "I cannot express to thee my long lessons in spelling have helped me, and now m quiet joy is inexpressible. Much as I find that is new, I find nothing unexpected; everything fits in, because I have n system, and desire nothing but the pure truth." To help hi

[1] This work contains a little treatise on anatomy, which testifies the patienc of the theologian's study.

in his spelling he begins algebra; but the nature of his mind was too unmathematical for him to pursue that study long.

Science and love were the two pillars of his existence in these days. "I feel that thou art always with me," he writes; "thy presence never leaves me. In thee I have a standard of all women, yea of all men; in thy love I have a standard of fate. Not that it darkens the world to me, on the contrary, it makes the world clear; I see plainly how men are, think, wish, strive after, and enjoy; and I give every one his due, and rejoice silently in the thought that I possess so indestructible a treasure."

The duke increased his salary by 200 thalers, and this, with the 1800 thalers received from the paternal property, made his income now 3200 thalers. He had need of money, both for his purposes and his numerous charities. We have seen, in the case of Kraft, how large was his generosity; and in one of his letters to his beloved, he exclaims, "God grant that I may daily become more economical, that I may be able to do more for others." The reader knows this is not a mere phrase thrown in the air. All his letters speak of the suffering he endured from the sight of so much want in the people. "The world is narrow," he writes, "and not every spot of earth bears every tree; mankind suffers, and *one is ashamed to see oneself so favoured above so many thousands.* We hear constantly how poor the land is, and daily becomes poorer; but we partly think this is not true, and partly hurry it away from our minds when once we see the truth with open eyes, see the irremediableness, and see how matters are always bungled and botched!" That he did his utmost to ameliorate the condition of the people in general, and to ameliorate particular sorrows as far as lay in his power, is strikingly evident in the concurrent testimony of all who knew anything of his doings. If he did not write dithyrambs of Freedom, and was not profoundly enthusiastic for Fatherland, let us attribute it to any cause but want of heart.

The stillness and earnestness of his life seem to have somewhat toned down the society of Weimar. He went very rarely to court; and he not being there to animate it with his inventions, the Duchess Amalia complained that they were all asleep; the duke also found society insipid: "the men have lived through their youth, and the women mostly married." The duke altered with the rest. The influence of his dear friend was daily turning him into more resolute paths; it had

even led him to the study of science, as we learn from hi letters. And Herder, also, now occupied with his great work shared these ideas, and enriched himself with Goethe's friend ship. Jacobi came to Weimar, and saw his old friend again quitting him with real sorrow. He was occupied at this time with the dispute about Lessing's Spinozism, and tried to brin Goethe into it, who very characteristically told him, "Before I write a syllable *μετα τα φυσικα*, I must first have clearly settled my *φυσικα*." All controversy was repugnant to Goethe's nature: he said, "If Raphael were to paint it, and Shakspear dramatise it, I could scarcely find any pleasure in it." Jacobi certainly was not the writer to conquer such repugnance Goethe objected to his tone almost as much as to his opinions "When self-esteem expresses itself in contempt of another, be he the meanest, it must be repellant. A flippant, frivolous man may ridicule others, may controvert them, scorn them but he who has any respect for himself seems to have re nounced the right of thinking meanly of others. And what are we all that we can dare to raise ourselves to any height?" He looks upon Jacobi's metaphysical *tic* as a compensation for all the goods the gods have given him. "House, riches children, sister and friends, and a long &c., &c., &c. On the other hand, God has punished you with metaphysics like a thorn in your flesh; me he has blessed with science, that I may be happy in the contemplation of his works." How characteristic is this: "When you say we can only *believe* in God (p. 101), I answer that I lay great stress on *seeing* (*schauen*) and when Spinoza, speaking of *scientia intuitiva*, says: *Hoc cognoscendi genus procedit ab adequata idea essentiæ formalis quorundam Dei attributorum ad adequatam cognitionem essentiæ rerum*, these few words give me courage to dedicate my whole life to the observation of things which I can reach, and of whose *essentiæ formalis* I can hope to form an adequate idea without in the least troubling myself how far I can go." He was at variance, and justly, with those who called Spinoza an atheist. He called him the most theistical of theists, and the most Christian of Christians—*theissimum et christianissimum*.

While feeling the separation of opinion between himself and Jacobi, he still felt the sympathy of old friendship. It was otherwise with Lavater. Their intimacy had been great no amount of difference had overshadowed it, until the priestly element of Lavater, formerly in abeyance, grew into offensive prominence. He clouded his intellect with superstitions, and

aspired to be a prophet. He had believed in Cagliostro and his miracles, exclaiming, "Who would be so great as he, had he but a true sense of the Evangelists?" He called upon that mystifier, in Strasburg, but was at once sent about his business. "When a great man," writes Goethe of Lavater, in 1782, "has a dark corner in him, it is terribly dark." And the dark corner in Lavater begins to make him uneasy. "I see the highest power of reason united in Lavater with the most odious superstition, and that by a knot of the finest and most inextricable kind." To the same effect he says in one of the Xenien—

> Wie verfährt die Natur um Hohes und Niedres im Menschen
> Zu verbinden? sie stellt Eitelkeit zwischen hinein.

It was a perception of what he thought the hypocritical nature of Lavater which thoroughly disgusted him, and put an end to their friendship; mere difference of opinion never separated him from a friend.

His scientific studies became enlarged by the addition of a microscope, with which he followed the investigations of Gleichen, and gained some insight into the marvels of the world of Infusoria. His drawings of the animalcules seen by him were sent to the Frau von Stein; and to Jacobi he wrote: "Botany and the microscope are now the chief enemies I have to contend against. But I live in perfect solitude apart from all the world, as dumb as a fish." Amid these multiform studies,—mineralogy, osteology, botany, and constant "dipping" into Spinoza, his poetic studies might seem to have fallen into the background, did we not know that *Wilhelm Meister* has reached the fifth book, the opera of *Scherz, List, und Rache* is written, the great religious-scientific poem *Die Geheimnisse* is planned, *Elpenor* has two acts completed, and many of the minor poems are written. Among these poems, be it noted, are the two songs in *Wilhelm Meister*, "*Kennst du das Land*" and "*Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*," which speak feelingly of his longing for Italy. The preparations for that journey are made in silence. He is studying Italian, and undertakes the revision of his works for a new edition, in which Wieland and Herder are to help him.

Seeing him thus happy in love, in friendship, in work, with young Fritz living with him, to give him, as it were, a home, and every year bringing fresh clearness in his purposes, one may be tempted to ask what was the strong impulse which

could make him break away from such a circle, and send him lonely over the Alps? Nothing but the impulse of genius Italy had been the dream of his youth. It was the land where self-culture was to gain rich material and firm basis That he was born to be a Poet, he now deliberately ac knowledged; and nothing but solitude in the Land of Son seemed wanting to him. Thither he yearned to go; thithe he would go.

He accompanied the duke, Herder, and the Frau von Stei to Carlsbad in July 1786, taking with him the works to b revised for Göschen's new edition. The very sight of thes works must have strengthened his resolution. And when Herder and the Frau von Stein returned to Weimar, leaving him alone with the duke, the final preparations were made He had studiously concealed this project from every one excep the duke, whose permission was necessary; but even from him the project was partially concealed. "Forgive me," he wrot to the duke, "if at parting I spoke vaguely about my journey and its duration. I do not yet know myself what is to becom of me. You are happy in a chosen path. Your affairs are in good order, and you will excuse me if I now look after my own; nay, you have often urged me to do so. I am at thi moment certainly able to be spared; things are so arranged a to go on smoothly in my absence. In this state of things all ask is an indefinite furlough." He says that he feels it necessary for his intellectual health that he should "lose himself in world where he is unknown;" and begs that no one may b informed of his intended absence. "God bless you, is my hearty wish, and keep me your affection. Believe me that if desire to make my existence more complete, it is that I ma enjoy it better with you and yours."

This was on the 2nd September 1786. On the third h quitted Carlsbad incognito. His next letter to the duk begins thus: "One more friendly word out of the distance without date or place. Soon will I open my mouth and sa how I get on. How it will rejoice me once more to see you handwriting." And it ends thus: "Of course you let peopl believe that you know where I am." In the next letter h says, "I must still keep the secret of my whereabouts a littl longer."

CHAPTER V

ITALY

THE long yearning of his life was at last fulfilled: he was in Italy. Alone, and shrouded by an assumed name from all the interruptions with which the curiosity of admirers would have perplexed the author of *Werther*, but which never troubled the supposed merchant Herr Möller, he passed amid orange trees and vineyards, cities, statues, pictures and buildings, feeling himself "at home in the wide world, no longer an exile." The passionate yearnings of Mignon had grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, through the early associations of childhood, and all the ambitions of manhood, till at last they made him sick at heart. For some time previous to his journey he had been unable to look at engravings of Italian scenery, unable even to open a Latin book, because of the overpowering suggestions of the language; so that Herder could say of him that the only Latin author ever seen in his hand was Spinoza. The feeling grew and grew, a mental home-sickness which nothing but Italian skies could cure. We have only to read Mignon's song, "*Kennst du das Land*," which was written before this journey, to perceive how trance-like were his conceptions of Italy, and how restless was his desire to journey there.

And now this deep unrest was stilled. Italian voices were loud around him, Italian skies were above him, Italian Art was before him. He felt this journey was a new birth. His whole being was filled with warmth and light. Life stretched itself before him calm, radiant, and strong. He saw the greatness of his aims, and felt within him powers adequate to those aims.

He has written an account of his journey; but although no man could have produced a greater work, had he deliberately set himself to do so, and although some passages of this work are among the most delightful of the many pages written about Italy, yet the *Italiänische Reise* is, on the whole, a very disappointing book. Nor could it well have been otherwise, under the circumstances. It was not written soon after his return, when all was fresh in his memory, and when his style had still its warmth and vigour; but in the decline of his great powers,

he collected the hasty letters sent from Italy to the Frau von Stein, Herder, and others, and from them he extracted such passages as seemed suitable, weaving them together with no great care, or enthusiasm. Had he simply printed the letters themselves, they would doubtless have given us a far more vivid and interesting picture; in the actual form of the work we are wearied by various trifles and incidents of the day circumstantially narrated, which in letters would not impropriety find a place, but which here want the pleasant, careless, chatty form given by correspondence. The *Italiänische Reise* wants the charm of a collection of letters, and the solidity excellence of a deliberate work. It is mainly interesting as indicating the effect of Italy on his mind; an effect apparently too deep for utterance. He was too completely possessed by the new life which streamed through him, to bestow much time in analysing and recording his impressions.

Curious it is to notice his open-eyed interest in all the geological and meteorological phenomena which present themselves; an interest which has excited the sneers of some who think a poet has nothing better to do than to rhapsodise. They tolerate his enthusiasm for Palladio, because architecture is one of the Arts; and forgive the enthusiasm which seized him in Vicenza, and made him study Palladio's works as if he were about to train himself for an architect; but they are distressed to find him in Padua, once more occupied with "cabbages," and tormented with the vague conception of a Typical Plant, which will not leave him. Let me confess, however, that some cause for disappointment exists. The poet's yearning is fulfilled; and yet how little literary enthusiasm escapes him! Italy is the land of History, Literature, Painting, and Music; its highways are sacred with associations of the Past; its byways are centres of biographic and artistic interest. Yet Goethe, in raptures with the climate, and the beauties of Nature, is almost silent about Literature, has no sense of Music, and no feeling for History. He passes through Verona without a thought of Romeo and Juliet; through Ferrara without a word of Ariosto, and scarcely a word of Tasso. In this land of the Past, it is the Present only which allures him. He turns aside in disgust from the pictures of crucifixions, martyrdoms, emaciated monks, and all the hospital pathos which makes galleries hideous; only in Raphael's healthier beauty, and more human conceptions, can he take delight. He has no historic sense enabling him to qualify his

hatred of superstition by recognition of the painful religious struggles which, in their evolutions, assumed these superstitious forms. He considers the pictures as things of the present, and because their motives are hideous he is disgusted; but a man of more historic feeling would, while marking his dislike of such conceptions, have known how to place them in their serial position in the historic development of mankind.

It is not for Literature, it is not for History, it is not for poetical enthusiasm, we must open the *Italiänische Reise*. There is no eloquence in the book; no, not even when, at Venice, he first stands in presence of the sea. Think of the feelings which the first sight of the sea must call up in the mind of a poet, and then marvel at his reserve. But if the *Italiänische Reise* does not flash out in eloquence, it is everywhere warm with the intense happiness of the writer. In Venice, for example, his enjoyment seems to have been great, as every hour the place ceased to be a *name* and became a *picture*. The canals, lagoons, narrow streets, splendid architecture, and animated crowds, were inexhaustible delights. From Venice he passed rapidly through Ferrara, Bologna, Florence, Arezzo, Perugia, Foligno, and Spoleto, reaching Rome on the 28th October.

In Rome, where he stayed four months, enjoyment and education went hand in hand. "All the dreams of my youth I now see living before me. Everywhere I go I find an old familiar face; everything is just what I thought it, and yet everything is new. It is the same with ideas. I have gained no new idea, but the old ones have become so definite, living, and connected one with another, that they may pass as new." The riches of Rome are at first bewildering; a long residence is necessary for each object to make its due impression. Goethe lived there among some German artists: Angelica Kaufmann, for whom he had great regard, Tischbein, Moritz, and others. They respected his incognito as well as they could, although the fact of his being in Rome could not long be entirely concealed. He gained, however, the main object of his incognito, and avoided being lionised. He had not come to Italy to have his vanity tickled by the approbation of society; he came for self-culture, and resolutely pursued his purpose.

Living amid such glories of the past, treading each day the ground of the Eternal City, every breath from the Seven Hills must have carried to him some thought of history. "Even

Roman antiquities," he writes, "begin to interest me. History, inscriptions, coins, which hitherto I never cared to hear about, now press upon me. Here one reads history in quite another spirit than elsewhere; not only Roman history, but world history." Yet I do not find that he read much history, even here. Art was enough to occupy him; and for Painting he had a passion which renders his want of talent still more noticeable. He visited churches and galleries with steady earnestness; studied Winckelmann, and discussed critical points with the German artists. Unhappily he also wasted precious time in fruitless efforts to attain facility in drawing. These occupations, however, did not prevent his completing the versification of *Iphigenia*, which he read to the German circle, but found only Angelica who appreciated it; the others having expected something *genialisch*, something in the style of *Götz with the Iron Hand*. Nor was he much more fortunate with the Weimar circle, who, as we have already seen, preferred the prose version.

Art thus with many-sided influence allures him, but does not completely fill up his many-sided activity. Philosophic speculations give new and wondrous meanings to Nature: and the ever-pressing desire to discover the secret of vegetable forms sends him meditative through the gardens about Rome. He feels he is on the track of a law which, if discovered, will reduce to unity the manifold variety of forms. Men who have never felt the passion of discovery may rail at him for thus, in Rome, forgetting, among plants, the quarrels of the Senate and the eloquence of Cicero; but all who have been haunted by a great idea will sympathise with him, and understand how insignificant is the existence of a thousand Ciceros in comparison with a law of Nature.

Among the few acquaintances he made, let us note that of Monti the poet, at the performance of whose tragedy, *Aristodemo*, he assisted. Through this acquaintance he was reluctantly induced to allow himself to be enrolled a member of the Arcadia,[1] under the title of *Megalio*, "*per causa delle grandezza*, or rather *grandiosità delle mie opere*, as they express it."

And what said Weimar to this prolonged absence of its poet? Instead of rejoicing in his intense enjoyment, instead of sympathising with his aims, Weimar grumbled and gossiped

[1] This is erroneously placed by him during his second residence in Rome. His letter to Fritz von Stein, however, gives the true date.

and was loud in disapprobation of his neglect of duties at home, while wandering among ruins and statues. Schiller, who had meanwhile come to Weimar, sends to Körner the echo of these grumblings: "Poor Weimar! Goethe's return is uncertain, and many here look upon his eternal separation from all business as decided. While he is painting in Italy, the Vogts and Schmidts must work for him like beasts of burden. He spends in Italy for doing nothing a salary of 1800 dollars, and they, for half that sum, must do double work." One reads such sentences from a Schiller with pain; and there are several other passages in the correspondence which betray a jealousy of his great rival, explicable, perhaps, by the uneasy, unhappy condition in which he then struggled, but which gives his admirers pain. This jealousy we shall hereafter see openly and even fiercely avowed.

While Weimar grumbled, Weimar's duke in truer sympathy wrote affectionately to him, releasing him from all official duties, and extending the leave of absence as long as it might be desired. Without Goethe, Weimar must indeed have been quite another place to Karl August; but no selfishness made him desire to shorten his friend's stay in Italy. Accordingly, on the 22nd of February, Goethe quitted Rome for Naples, where he spent five weeks of hearty enjoyment. Throwing aside his incognito, he mixed freely with society, and still more freely with the people, whose happy careless *far niente* delighted him. He there made the acquaintance of Sir William Hamilton, and saw the lovely Lady Hamilton, the syren whose beauty led the noble Nelson astray. Goethe was captivated by her grace, as she moved through the mazes of the shawl dance she made famous. He was also captivated in quite another manner by the writings of Vico, which had been introduced to him by his acquaintance Filangierie, who spoke of the great thinker with southern enthusiasm.

"If in Rome one must *study*," he writes, "here in Naples one can only *live*." And he lived a manifold life: on the seashore, among the fishermen, among the people, among the nobles, under Vesuvius, on the moonlit waters, on the causeway of Pompeii, in Pausilippo,—everywhere drinking in fresh delight, everywhere feeding his fancy and experience with new pictures. Thrice did he ascend Vesuvius; and as we shall see him during the campaign in France pursuing his scientific observations undisturbed by the cannon, so here

also we observe him deterred by no perils from making th most of his opportunity. Nor is this the only noticeabl trait. Vesuvius could make him forget in curiosity hi personal safety, but it did not excite one sentence of poetry His description is as quiet as if Vesuvius were Hampstea Heath.

The enthusiasm breaks out, however, here and there. A Pæstum he was in raptures with the glorious antique temple the remains of which still speak so eloquently of what Grecia art must have been.

Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Capua interested him less tha might have been anticipated. "The book of Nature," h says, "is after all the only one which has in every pag important meanings." It was a book which fastened hin as fairy tales fasten children.

> "Here about the beach he wandered, nourishing a youth sublime
> With the fairy tales of Science and the long result of Time."

Wandering thus lonely, his thoughts hurried by the music o the waves, the long-baffling, long-soliciting mystery of vege table forms grew into clearness before him, and the typica plant was no more a vanishing conception, but a principl clearly grasped.

On the 2nd of April he reached Palermo. He stayed fortnight among its orange trees and oleanders, given up t the exquisite sensations which, lotus-like, lulled him int forgetfulness of everything, save the present. Homer her first became a living poet to him. He bought a copy of th *Odyssey*, read it with unutterable delight, and translated as h went, for the benefit of his friend Kniep. Inspired by it, h sketched the plan of *Nausikaa*, a drama in which the *Odysse* was to be concentrated. Like so many other plans, this wa never completed. The garden of Alcinous had to yield t the *Metamorphoses of Plants*, which tyrannously usurped hi thoughts.

Palermo was the native city of Count Cagliostro, th audacious adventurer who, three years before, had made s conspicuous a figure in the affair of the Diamond Necklace Goethe's curiosity to see the parents of this reprobate, led hi to visit them, under the guise of an Englishman bringing ther news of their son. He has narrated the adventure at som length; but as nothing of biographical interest lies therein, pass on with this brief indication, adding that his sympath

always active, was excited in favour of the poor people, and he twice sent them pecuniary assistance, confessing the deceit he had practised.

He returned to Naples on the 14th of May, not without a narrow escape from shipwreck. He had taken with him the two first acts of *Tasso* (then in prose), to remodel them in verse. He found on reading them over, that they were soft and vague in expression, but otherwise needing no material alteration. After a fortnight at Naples, he once more arrived in Rome. This was on the 6th of June 1787, and he remained till the 22nd of April 1788: ten months of labour, which only an activity so unusual as his own could have made so fruitful. Much of his time was wasted in the dabbling of an amateur, striving to make himself what Nature had refused to make him. Yet it is perhaps perilous to say that with such a mind any effort was fruitless. If he did not become a painter by his studies, the studies were doubtless useful to him in other ways. Art and antiquities he studied in company with artistic friends. Rome is itself an education; and he was eager to learn. Practice of the art sharpened his perceptions. He learned perspective, drew from the model, was passionate in endeavours to succeed with landscape, and even began to model a little in clay. Angelica Kaufmann told him, that in Art he *saw* better than any one else; and the others believed perhaps that with study he would be able to do more than see. But all his study and all his practice were vain; he never attained even the excellence of an amateur. To think of a Goethe thus obstinately cultivating a branch of art for which he had no talent, makes us look with kinder appreciation on the spectacle, so frequently presented, of really able men obstinately devoting themselves to produce poetry which no cultivated mind can read; men whose culture and insight are insufficient to make them perceive in themselves the difference between aspiration and inspiration.

If some time was wasted upon efforts to become a painter, the rest was well employed. Not to mention his scientific investigations, there was abundance of work executed. *Egmont* was rewritten. The rough draft of the two first acts had been written at Frankfurt, in the year 1775; and a rough cast of the whole was made at Weimar, in 1782. He now took it up again, because the outbreak of troubles in the Netherlands once more brought the patriots into collision with the House of Orange. The task of rewriting was

laborious, but very agreeable, and he looked with pride on the completed drama, hoping it would gratify his friends. These hopes were somewhat dashed by Herder, who—never much given to praise—would not accept Clärchen, a character which the poet thought, and truly thought, he had felicitously drawn. Besides *Egmont*, he prepared for the new edition of his works, new versions of *Claudine von Villa Bella* and *Erwin und Elmire*, two comic operas. Some scenes of *Faust* were written; also these poems: *Amor als Landschaftsmaler*; *Amor als Gast*; *Künstler's Erdenwallen*; and *Künstler's Apotheose*. He thus completed the last four volumes of his collected works which Göschen had undertaken to publish and which we have seen him take to Carlsbad and to Italy, as his literary task.

The effect of his residence in Italy, especially in Rome, was manifold and deep. Foreign travel, even to unintelligent uninquiring minds, is always of great influence, not merely by the presentation of new objects, but also, and mainly, by the withdrawal of the mind from all the intricate connections of habit and familiarity which mask the real relations of life. This withdrawal is important, because it gives a new standing-point from which we can judge ourselves and others, and it shows how much that we have been wont to regard as essential is, in reality, little more than routine. Goethe certainly acquired clearer views with respect to himself and his career severed from all those links of habit and routine which had bound him in Weimar, he learned in Italy to take another and a wider survey of his position. He returned home, to all appearance, a changed man. The crystallising process which commenced in Weimar was completed in Rome. As a decisive example, we note that he there finally relinquished his attempt to become a painter. He feels that he is born only for poetry, and during the next ten years resolves to devote himself to literature.

One result of his study of art was to reconcile his theories and his tendencies. We have noted on several occasions the objective tendency of his mind, and we now find him recognising that tendency as dominant in ancient art. "Let me," he writes to Herder, "express my meaning in a few words. The ancients represented *existences*, we usually represent the *effect*; they portrayed the terrible, we terribly; they the agreeable, we agreeably, and so forth. Hence our exaggeration, mannerism, false graces, and all excesses. For when we

strive after effect, we never think we can be effective enough." This admirable sentence is as inaccurate in an historical, as it is accurate in an æsthetical sense; unless by the ancients we understand only Homer and some pieces of sculpture. As a criticism of Æschylus, Euripides, Pindar, Theocritus, Horace, Ovid, or Catullus, it is quite wide of the truth; indeed, it is merely the traditional fiction current about ancient art, which vanishes on a steady gaze; but inaccurate though it be, it serves to illustrate Goethe's theories. If he found *that* in Italy, it was because that best assimilated with his own tendencies, which were eminently concrete. "People talk of the study of the ancients," he says somewhere, "but what does it mean, except that we should look at the real world, and strive to express it, for that is what they did." And to Eckermann he said: "All eras in a state of decline are subjective; on the other hand, all progressive eras have an objective tendency. Our present time is retrograde, for it is subjective." Here in Rome he listens to his critical friends with a quiet smile, "when in metaphysical discussions they held me not competent. I, being an artist, regard this as of little moment. Indeed, I prefer that the principle from which and through which I work should be hidden from me." How few Germans could say this; how few could say with him, "*Ich habe nie über das Denken gedacht;* I have never thought about Thought."

Leaving all such generalities, and descending once more to biographic detail, we meet Goethe again in the toils of an unhappy passion. How he left the Frau von Stein we have seen. Her image accompanied him everywhere. To her he wrote constantly. But he has before confessed that he loved her less when absent from her, and the length of his absence now seems to have cooled his ardour. He had been a twelvemonth away from her, when the charms of a young Milanese, with whom he was thrown together in Castel Gandolfo, made him forget the coldness, almost approaching rudeness, with which hitherto he had guarded himself from female fascination. With the rashness of a boy he falls in love, and then learns that his mistress is already betrothed. I am unable to tell this story with any distinctness, for he was nearly eighty years old when he wrote the pretty but vague account of it in the *Italiänische Reise*, and there are no other sources come to hand. Enough that he loved, learned she was betrothed, and withdrew from her society to live down his grief. During her

illness, which followed upon an unexplained quarrel with her betrothed, he was silently assiduous in attentions; but although they met after her recovery, and she was then free, I do not find him taking any steps towards replacing the husband she had lost. As may be supposed, the tone of his letters to the Frau von Stein became visibly altered: they became less confidential and communicative; a change which did not escape her.

With Herder his correspondence continues affectionate. Pleasant it is to see the enthusiasm with which he receives Herder's *Ideen*, and reads it in Rome with the warmest admiration; so different from the way in which Herder receives what *he* sends from Rome!

On the 22nd April 1788, he turned homewards, quitting Rome with unspeakable regret, yet feeling himself equipped anew for the struggle of life. "The chief objects of my journey," he writes to the duke, "were these: to free myself from the physical and moral uneasiness which rendered me almost useless, and to still the feverish thirst I felt for true art. The first of these is tolerably, the second quite achieved." Taking *Tasso* with him to finish on his journey, he returned through Florence, Milan, Chiavenna, Lake Constance, Stuttgart, and Nürnberg, reaching Weimar on the 18th June, at ten o'clock in the evening.[1]

CHAPTER VI

EGMONT AND TASSO

THERE are men whose conduct we cannot approve, but whom we love more than many whose conduct is thoroughly admirable. When severe censors point out the sins of our favourites, reason may acquiesce, but the heart rebels. We make no protest, but in secret we keep our love unshaken. It is with

[1] It will be seen from this route that he never was in Genoa; consequently the passage in Schiller's correspondence with Körner (vol. iv. p. 59), wherein a certain G. is mentioned as having an unhappy attachment to an artist's model, cannot allude to Goethe. Indeed the context, and Körner's reply would make this plain to any critical sagacity; but many writers on Goethe are so ready to collect scandals without scrutiny, that this warning is not superfluous. Vehse, for instance, in his work on the court of Weimar, has not the slightest misgiving about the G. meaning Goethe; it never occurs to him to inquire whether Goethe ever was in Genoa, or whether the dates of these letters do not point unmistakably in another direction.

poems as with men. The greatest favourites are not the least amenable to criticism; the favourites with Criticism are not the darlings of the public. In saying this we do not stultify Criticism, any more than Morality is stultified in our love of agreeable rebels. In both cases admitted faults are cast into the background by some energetic excellence.

Egmont is such a work. It is far, very far, from a masterpiece, but it is an universal favourite. As a tragedy, criticism makes sad work with it; but when all is said, the reader thinks of Egmont and Clärchen, and flings criticisms to the dogs. These are the figures which remain in the memory: bright, genial, glorious creations, comparable to any to be found in the long galleries of Art.

As a Drama—*i.e.* a work constructed with a view to representation—it wants the two fundamental requisites, viz. a collision of elemental passions, from whence the tragic interest should spring; and the construction of its materials into the dramatic form. The first fault lies in the conception; the second in the execution The one in the error of the dramatic poet; the other of the dramatist. Had Shakspeare treated this subject, he would have thrown a life and character into the mobs, and a passionate movement into the great scenes, which would have made the whole live before our eyes. But I do not think he would have surpassed Egmont and Clärchen.

The slow languid movement of this piece, which makes the representation somewhat tedious, does not lie in the length of the speeches and scenes, so much as in the undramatic construction. Julian Schmidt has actually remarked: "A dramatic intention hovered before him, but he executed it in a lyrical musical style. Thus in the interview between Egmont and Orange, the two declaim against each other, instead of working on each other." It is in certain passages dramatic, but the whole is undramatic. It approximates to the novel in dialogue.

Schiller, in his celebrated review of this work, praises the art with which the local colouring of History is preserved; but most people would willingly exchange this historical colouring for some touches of dramatic movement. The merit, such as it is, belongs to erudition, not to poetry; for the local colour is not, as in *Götz*, and in Scott's romances, vivid enough to place the epoch before our eyes. Schiller, on the other hand, objects to the departure from history, in making Egmont unmarried, and to the departure from heroic dignity in making

him in love. Goethe of course knew that Egmont had a wife and several children. He rejected such historical details; and although I am disposed to agree with Schiller, that by the change he deprived himself of some powerful dramatic situations, I still think he did right in making the change.

In the first place it has given us the exquisite character of Clärchen, the gem of the piece. In the next place it is dubious whether he would have treated the powerful situations with the adequate dramatic intensity. He knew and confessed that his genius was not tragic. "I was not born for a tragic poet," he wrote to Zelter; "my nature is too conciliating; hence no really tragic situation interests me, for it is in its essence irreconcilable."

The character of Egmont is that of a healthy, noble, heroic man; and it is his humanity which the poet wishes to place before us. We are made spectators of a happy nature, not of great actions; the hero, for he is one, presents himself to us in his calm strength, perfect faculties, joyous, healthy freedom of spirit, loving generous disposition; not in the hours of strenuous conflict, not in the spasms of his strength, not in the altitude of momentary exultation, but in the quiet strength of permanent power. This presentation of the character robs the story of its dramatic collision. The tendency of Goethe's mind, which made him look upon men rather as a Naturalist than as a Dramatist, led him to prefer delineating a character to delineating a *passion;* and his biographical tendency made him delineate Egmont as more like what Wolfgang Goethe would have been under the same circumstances. This same tendency to draw from his own experience, also led him to create Clärchen. Rosenkranz, indeed, seeking to show the profound historical conception of this work, says, that the love for Clärchen was necessary "as an indication of Egmont's sympathy with the people"; but the reason seems to me to have been less critical, and more biographical.

It is a sombre and a tragic episode in history which is treated in this piece. The revolution of the Netherlands was one imperiously commanded by the times; it was the revolt of citizens against exasperating oppression; of conscience against religious tyranny; of the nation against a foreigner. The Duke of Alva, who thought it better the Emperor should lose the Netherlands than rule over a nation of heretics, but who was by no means willing that the Netherlands should be lost came to replace the Duchess of Parma in the regency; cam

o suppress with the sword and scaffold the rebellion of the heretics. The strong contrast of Spaniard and Hollander, of Catholic and Protestant, of despotism and liberty which this ubject furnished, are all *indicated* by Goethe; but he has not sed them as powerful dramatic elements. The characters alk, talk well, talk lengthily; they do not act. In the course of heir conversations we are made aware of the state of things; ve do not dramatically assist at them.

Egmont opens with a scene between soldiers and citizens, hooting at a mark. A long conversation lets us into the ecret of the unquiet state of the country, and the various pinions afloat. Compare it with analogous scenes in Shakpeare, and the difference between dramatic and non-dramatic reatment will be manifest. Here the men are puppets; we ee the author's *intention* in all they say; in Shakspeare the nen betray themselves, each with some peculiar trick of char-cter.

The next scene is still more feeble. The Duchess of Parma nd Machiavelli are in conversation. She asks his counsel; e advises tolerance, which she feels to be impossible: except n the casual indication of two characters, the whole of this cene is unnecessary: and indeed Schiller, in his adaptation f this play to the stage, lopped away the character of the Duchess altogether, as an excrescence.

The free, careless, unsuspicious nature of Egmont is well ontrasted with that of the suspicious Orange; his character is ainted by numerous vivid touches, and we are in one scene nade aware of the danger he is in. But the scene ends as it egan, in talk. The next scene introduces Clärchen and her nhappy lover Brackenburg. Very pretty is this conception f his patient love, and her compassion for the love she annot share:

Mother. Do you send him away so soon?

Clärchen. I long to know what is going on; and besides—o not be angry with me, mother—his presence pains me. I ever know how I ought to behave towards him. I have one him a wrong, and it goes to my very heart to see how eeply he feels it. Well—it can't be helped now.

Mother. He is such a true-hearted fellow!

Clärchen. I cannot help it, I must treat him kindly. *Often ithout a thought I return the gentle, loving pressure of his and.* I reproach myself that I am deceiving him, that I am

nourishing a vain hope in his heart. I am in a sad plight God knows I do not willingly deceive him. *I do not wish him to hope, yet I cannot let him despair!*

Is not that taken from the life, and is it not exquisitely touched

Clärchen. I loved him once, and in my soul I love him still. I could have married him; yet I believe I never was really and passionately in love with him.

Mother. You would have been happy with him.

Clärchen. I should have been provided for, and led a quiet life.

Mother. And it has all been trifled away by your folly.

Clärchen. I am in a strange position. When I think how has come about, I know it indeed, and yet I know it not *But I have only to look on Egmont, and all becomes clear to me* yes, then even stranger things would seem quite natural. Oh what a man he is! The provinces worship him. And in his arms am I not the happiest being alive?

Mother. And the future?

Clärchen. I ask but this—does he love me? *Does* he love me—as if there could be a doubt!

There are reminiscences of Frederika in this simple, loving Clärchen, and in the picture of her devotion to the man so much above her. This scene, however, though very charming is completely without onward movement. It is talk, not action; and the return of Brackenburg at the close, with his despairing monologue, is not sufficient for the termination of an act.

In act second we see the citizens again; they are becoming more unruly as events advance. Vanzen comes to stir the rebellious feelings; a quarrel ensues, which is quieted by the appearance of Egmont, who, on hearing their complaints advises them to be prudent. "Do what you can to keep the peace; you stand in bad repute already. Provoke not the king still further. The power is in his hands. An honest citizen who maintains himself industriously has everywhere as much freedom as he needs." He quits them, promising to do his utmost for them, advising them to stand against the new doctrines, and not to attempt to secure privileges by sedition. The people's hero is no demagogue. He opposes the turbulence of the mob, as he opposes the tyranny of the crown.

he next scene we have him with his secretary; and here are urther manifested the kindness and the *insouciance* of his ature. "It is my good fortune that I am joyous, live fast, nd take everything easily. I would not barter it for a tomb- ike security. My blood rebels against this Spanish mode of ife, nor are my actions to be regulated by the cautious mea- ures of the court. Do I live only to think of life? Shall I forego the enjoyment of the present moment that I may ecure the next, which, when it arrives, must be consumed in dle fears and anxieties?" This is not the language of a olitician, but of a happy man. "Take life too seriously, and vhat is it worth? If the morning wake us to no new joys, if he evening bring us not the hope of new pleasures, is it worth vhile to dress and undress? Does the sun shine on me o-day that I may reflect on yesterday? That I may en- leavour to foresee and to control what can neither be foreseen ior controlled—the destiny of to-morrow?" The present is nough for him. "The sunsteeds of Time, as if goaded by nvisible spirits, bear onward the light car of Destiny. Nothing emains for us but, with calm self-possession, firmly to grasp he reins, and guide the car now right, now left, here from the precipice, there from the rock. Who knows Whither he is asting? Who reflects from Whence he came?"

Very poetic, and tragic too, is this contrast of character vith circumstance. We know the peril which threatens him. Ve feel that this serenity is in itself the certain cause of his estruction; and it affects us like the joyousness of Romeo, vho, the moment before he hears the terrible news of Juliet's eath, feels "his bosom's lord sit lightly on its throne." In ne scene which follows between Egmont and Orange, there is fine argumentative exposition of their separate views of the tate of affairs; Orange warns him to fly while there is yet afety; but he sees that flight will hasten civil war, and he emains.

Act the third once more brings the Duchess and Machiavelli efore us, and once more they talk about the troubles of the me. The scene changes to Clärchen's house, and we are pectators of that exquisite interview which Scott has borrowed n *Kenilworth*, where Leicester appears to Amy Robsart in all is princely splendour. Beautiful as this scene is, it is not nough to constitute one act of a drama, especially the *third* ct; for nothing is done in it, nothing is indicated even in the evelopment of the story which had not been indicated before;

the action stands still that we may see childish delight womanly love, and manly tenderness.

The poetic reader, captivated by this scene, will be impatient at the criticism which espies a fault in it, and will declare such a picture infinitely superior to any dramatic effect. "What pedantry," he will exclaim, "to talk of technical demands in presence of a scene like this!" and with a lofty wave of the hand dismiss the critic into contempt. Nevertheless, the critic is forced by his office to consider what are the technical demands. If the poet has attempted a drama, he must be tried by dramatic standards. However much we may delight in the picture Goethe has presented in this third act, we cannot but feel that Shakspeare, while giving the picture would have made it subservient to the progress and development of the piece; for Shakspeare was not only a poet, he was also a dramatic poet.

Act the fourth again shows us citizens talking about the times, which grew more and more ominous. In the next scene Alva, the terrible Alva, appears, having laid all his plans. Orange has fled, but Egmont comes. A long discussion, very argumentative but utterly undramatic, between Alva and Egmont, is concluded by the arrest of the latter.

Act the fifth shows us Clärchen in the streets trying to rouse Brackenburg and the citizens to revolt and to the rescue of Egmont. There is great animation in this scene wherein love raises the simple girl into the heroine. The citizens are alarmed, and dread to hear Egmont named:

Clärchen. Stay! stay! Shrink not away at the sound of his name, to meet whom ye were wont to press forward so joyously! When rumour announced his approach, when the cry arose, "Egmont comes! he comes from Ghent!" the happy were they who dwelt in the streets through which he was to pass. And when the neighing of his steed was heard did not every one throw aside his work, while a ray of hope and joy, like a sunbeam from his countenance, stole over the toil-worn faces which peered from every window. Then as ye stood in doorways ye would lift up your children and pointing to him exclaim, "See! that is Egmont! he who towers above the rest! 'Tis from him ye must look for better times than those your poor fathers have known!"

Clärchen, unable to rouse the citizens, is led home by Bracke

burg. The scene changes to Egmont's prison, where he soliloquises on his fate; the scene again changes, and shows us Clärchen waiting with sickly impatience for Brackenburg to come and bring her the news. He comes; tells her Egmont is to die; she takes poison, and Brackenburg, in despair, resolves also to die. The final scene is very weak and very long. Egmont has an interview with Alva's son, whom he tries to persuade into aiding him to escape; failing in this, he goes to sleep on a couch, and Clärchen appears in a vision as the figure of Liberty. She extends to him a laurel crown. He wakes—to find the prison filled with soldiers who lead him to execution.

There are great inequalities in this work, and some disparities of style. It was written at three different periods of his life; and although, when once completed, a work may benefit by careful revision extending over many years, it will inevitably suffer from fragmentary composition; the delay which favours revision, is fatal to composition. A work of Art should be completed before the paint has had time to dry; otherwise the changes brought by time in the development of the artist's mind will make themselves felt in the heterogeneous structure of the work. *Egmont* was conceived in the period when Goethe was under the influence of Shakspeare; it was mainly executed in the period when he had taken a classical direction. It wants the stormy life of *Götz*, and the calm beauty of *Iphigenia*. Schiller thought the close was too much in the opera style; and Gervinus thinks that preoccupation with the opera, which Goethe at this period was led into by his friendly efforts to assist Kayser, has given the whole work an operatic turn. I confess I do not detect this; but I see a decided deficiency in dramatic construction, which is also to be seen in all his later works; and that he really did not know what the drama properly required, to *be* a drama as well as a poem, we shall see clearly illustrated in a future chapter. Nevertheless, I end as I began with saying that find what fault you will with *Egmont*, it still remains one of those general favourites against which criticism is powerless.

Still less satisfactory from the dramatic point of view is *Tasso;* of which we may say what Johnson says of *Comus*, "it is a series of faultless lines, but no drama." Indeed, for the full enjoyment of this exquisite poem, it is necessary that the reader should approach it as he approaches *Comus*, or *Manfred*, or *Philip von Artevelde*, with no expectations of

finding in it the qualities of *Othello*, or *Wallenstein*. It has charm which few can resist; but it wants all the requisites stage representation. There is scarcely any action; and wha little there is only serves as a vehicle of struggle which goes o in Tasso's mind, instead of the struggle and collision of tw minds. Even the dramatic elements of love and madness, a not dramatically treated. We feel their presence in Tasso mind; we never see their flaming energy fusing the hetero geneous materials of circumstance into fiery unity; we a thus spectators of a disease, not of an acted story. Hence th beauty of this work lies in its poetry, and cannot be reproduce in a translation.

The moment chosen by Goethe is when Tasso, having ju completed his *Jerusalem Delivered*, gives unmistakable sign of the unhappy passion and unhappy malady which hav made his biography one of the saddest in the sad list "mighty poets in their misery dead." German critics hav affirmed that the piece is saturated with historical facts an local colour. But it is clear that great liberties have bee taken both with history and local colour. Indeed, there wa too obvious a superficial resemblance between the position Tasso at the court of Ferrara and Goethe at the court Weimar not to make these liberties necessary. Had Goeth painted the actual relation between Tasso and Alphonso, th public might have read between the lines reflections on Ka August. Moreover, it is difficult to deny the truth of Madam de Stael's remark, that "les couleurs du Midi ne sont pas ass prononcées." The tone of the work is German throughou and would considerably have surprised an Italian of the cou of Ferrara.

Tasso was finally completed shortly after the rupture wi the Frau von Stein, presently to be related; but I ha noticed it here, as the most convenient place. It is in tru to be regarded as one of the products of his early Weim years, having been merely versified in Italy, and after h return home.

CHAPTER VII

RETURN HOME

GOETHE came back from Italy greatly enriched, but by no means satisfied. The very wealth he had accumulated embarrassed him, by the new problems it presented, and the new horizons it revealed:

> "For all experience is an arch wherethrough
> Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
> For ever and for ever as we move."

He had in Rome become aware that a whole life of study would scarcely suffice to still the craving hunger for knowledge; and he left Italy with deep regret. The return home was thus, in itself, a grief; the arrival was still more painful. Every one will understand this, who has lived for many months away from the circle of old habits and old acquaintances, feeling in the new world a larger existence more consonant with his nature and his aims; and has then returned once more to the old circle, to find it unchanged,—pursuing its old paths, moved by the old impulses, guided by the old lights,—so that he feels himself a *stranger*. To return to a great capital, after such an absence, is to feel ill at ease; but to return from Italy to Weimar! It we, on entering London, after a residence abroad, find the same interests occupying our friends which occupied them when we left, the same family gossip, the same books talked about, the same placards loud upon the walls of the unchanging streets, the world seeming to have stood still while we have lived through so much: what must Goethe have felt coming from Italy, with his soul filled with new experience and new ideas, on observing the quiet unchanged Weimar? No one seemed to understand him; no one sympathised in his enthusiasm, or in his regrets. They found him changed. He found them moving in the same dull round, like blind horses in a mill.

First, let us note that he came back resolved to dedicate his life to Art and Science, and no more to waste efforts in the laborious duties of office. From Rome he had thus written to Karl August: "How grateful am I to you for having given me this priceless leisure. My mind having from youth upwards had this bent, I should never have been at ease until I had reached this end. My relation to affairs sprang out of my

personal relation to you; now let a new relation, after s many years, spring from the former. I can truly say, that i the solitude of these eighteen months I have found my ow self again. But as what? As an Artist! What else I ma be, you will be able to judge and use. You have show throughout your life that princely knowledge of what men ar and what they are useful for; and this knowledge has gone c increasing, as your letters clearly prove to me: to that knov ledge I gladly submit myself. Ask my aid in that Symphon which you mean to play, and I will at all times gladly ar honestly give you my advice. Let me fulfil the whole measu of my existence at your side, then will my powers, like a nev opened and purified spring, easily be directed hither an thither. Already I see what this journey has done for m how it has clarified and brightened my existence. As yo have hitherto borne with me, so care for me in future; you c me more good than I can do myself, more than I can clain I have seen a large and beautiful bit of the world, and th result is, that I wish only to live with you and yours. Ye I shall become more to you than I have been before, if you l me do what I only can do, and leave the rest to others. Yo sentiments for me, as expressed in your letters, are so beautifu so honourable to me, that they make me blush,—that I ca only say: Lord, here am I, do with thy servant as seemet good unto thee."

The wise duke answered this appeal nobly. He release his friend from the Presidency of the Chamber, and from th direction of the War Department, but kept a distinct place f him in the Council, "whenever his other affairs allowed hi to attend." The poet remained the adviser of his prince, b was relieved from the more onerous duties of office. Th direction of the Mines, and of all Scientific and Artistic I stitutions, he retained; among them that of the Theatre.

It was generally found that he had grown colder in h manners since his Italian journey. Indeed, the process crystallisation had rapidly advanced; and beyond this effe of development, which would have taken place had he nev left Weimar, there was the further addition of his feelin himself at a different standing-point from those around hi The less they understood him, the more he drew with himself. Those who understood him, Moritz, Meyer, th duke, and Herder, found no cause of complaint.

During the first few weeks he was of course constant

at court. Thus the *Hof-Courier Buch* tells us that the day after his arrival he dined at court. This was the 19th June. Again on the 20th, 22nd, 25th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th. In July, on the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st, and so on almost uninterruptedly till September. His official release made the bond of friendship stronger. Besides, every one was naturally anxious to hear about his travels, and he was delighted to talk of them.

But if Weimar complained of the change, to which it soon grew accustomed, there was one who had deeper cause of complaint, and whose nature was not strong enough to bear it—the Frau von Stein. Absence had cooled the ardour of his passion. In Rome, to the negative influence of absence, was added the positive influence of a new love. He had returned to Weimar, still grateful to her for the happiness she had given him, still feeling for her the affection which no conduct of hers could destroy, and which warmed his heart towards her to the last; but he returned also with little of the passion she had for ten years inspired; he returned with a full conviction that he had outlived it. Nor did her presence serve to rekindle the smouldering embers. Charlotte von Stein was now five-and-forty. It is easy to imagine how much he must have been struck with the change in her. Had he never left her side, this change would have approached with gradual steps, stealthily escaping observation; but the many months' absence removed a veil from his eyes. She was five-and-forty to him, as to others. In this perilous position she adopted the very worst course. She found him changed, and told him so, in a way which made him feel more sharply the change in her. She thought him cold, and her resource was—reproaches. The resource was more feminine than felicitous. Instead of sympathising with him in his sorrow at leaving Italy, she felt the regret as an offence; and perhaps it was; but a truer, nobler nature would surely have known how to merge its own pain in sympathy with the pain of one beloved. He regretted Italy; she was not a compensation to him; she saw this, and her self-love suffered. The coquette who had so long held him captive, now saw the captive freed from her chains. It was a trying moment. But even in the worst aspect of the position, there was that which a worthy nature would have regarded as no small consolation: she might still be his dearest friend; and the friendship of such a man

was worth more than the love of another. But this was not to be.

Before the final rupture, he went with her to Rudolstadt and there for the first time spoke with Schiller, who thus writes to Körner, 12th September, 1788: "At last I can tell you about Goethe, and satisfy your curiosity. The first sight of him was by no means what I had been led to expect. He is of middle stature, holds himself stiffly and walks stiffly; his countenance is not open, but his eye very full of expression lively, and one hangs with delight on his glances. With much seriousness his mien has nevertheless much goodness and benevolence. He is brown complexioned, and seemed to me older in appearance than his years. His voice is very agreeable, his narrations are flowing, animated, and full of spirit: one listens with pleasure; and when he is in good humour, as was the case this time, he talks willingly and with great interest. We soon made acquaintance, and without the slightest effort: the circle, indeed, was too large, and every one too jealous of him, for me to speak much with him alone, or on any but general topics. . . . On the whole, I must say that my great idea of him is not lessened by this personal acquaintance; but I doubt whether we shall ever become intimate. Much that to me is now of great interest, he has already lived through: he is, less in years than in experience and self-culture, so far beyond me that we can never meet on the way; and his whole being is originally different from mine, his world is not my world, our conceptions are radically different. Time will show."

Could he have looked into Goethe's soul he would have seen there was a wider gulf between them than he imagined. In scarcely any other instance was so great a friendship ever formed between men who at first seemed more opposed to each other. At this moment Goethe was peculiarly ill disposed towards any friendship with Schiller, for he saw in him the powerful writer who had corrupted and misled the nation. He has told us how pained he was on his return from Italy to find Germany jubilant over Heinse's *Ardinghello* and Schiller's *Robbers*, and *Fiesco*. He had pushed far from him, and for ever, the whole *Sturm und Drang* creed; he had outgrown that tendency, and learned to hate his own work which sprang from it; in Italy he had taken a new direction hoping to make the nation follow him in this higher region as it had followed him before. But while he advanced, the

nation stood still; he "passed it like a ship at sea." Instead of following him, the public followed his most extravagant imitators. He hoped to enchant men with the calm ideal beauty of an *Iphigenia*, and the sunny heroism of an *Egmont;* and found every one enraptured with *Ardinghello* and *Karl Moor*. His publisher had to complain that the new edition of his works, on which so much time and pains had been bestowed, went off very slowly, while the highly-spiced works of his rivals were bought by thousands.

> Schüler macht sich der Schwärmer genug, und rühret die Menge
> Wenn der vernünftige Mann einzelne Liebende zählt.
> Wunderthätige Bilder sind meist nur schlechte Gemälde,
> Werke des Geists und der Kunst sind für den Pöbel nicht da.[1]

In this frame of mind it is natural that he should keep aloof from Schiller, and withstand the various efforts made to bring about an intimacy. "To be much with Goethe," Schiller writes in the February following, "would make me unhappy; with his nearest friends he has no moments of overflowingness: I believe, indeed, he is an egoist, in an unusual degree. He has the talent of conquering men, and of binding them by small as well as great attentions: but he always knows how to hold himself free. He makes his existence benevolently felt, but only like a god, without giving himself: this seems to me a consequent and well-planned conduct, which is calculated to ensure the highest enjoyment of self-love. . . . Thereby is he hateful to me, although I love his genius from my heart, and think greatly of him. . . . It is quite a peculiar mixture of love and hatred he has awakened in me, a feeling akin to that which Brutus and Cassius must have had for Cæsar. I could kill his spirit, and then love him again from my heart." These sentences read very strangely now we know how Schiller came to love and reverence the man whom he here so profoundly misunderstands, and whom he judges thus from the surface. But they are interesting sentences in many respects; in none more so than in showing that if he, on nearer acquaintance, came to love the noble nature of his great rival, it is a proof that he had seen how superficial had been his first judgment. Let the reader who has been led to think harshly of Goethe, from one cause or another, take this into considera-

[1] Dreamers make scholars enough, they flatter the weakness of thousands,
While the intelligent man counts his disciples by tens.
Poor indeed are the pictures famous for miracle-working:
Art in its loftiest forms ne'er can be prized by the mob.

tion, and ask himself whether he too, on better knowledg might not alter his opinion.

"With Goethe," so runs another letter, "I will not compa myself, when he puts forth his whole strength. He has i more genius than I have, and greater wealth of knowledge, more accurate sensuous perception (*eine sichere Sinnlichkeit* and to all these he adds an artistic taste, cultivated a sharpened by knowledge of all works of Art." But with th acknowledgment of superiority there was coupled an unpleasa feeling of *envy* at Goethe's happier lot, a feeling which his ow unhappy position renders very explicable. "I will let you s into my heart," he writes to Körner. "*Once for all, this mo this Goethe, stands in my way*, and recalls to me so often th fate has dealt hardly with me. How lightly is *his* genius born by his fate; and how must *I* even to this moment struggle!

Fate had indeed treated them very differently. Throug out Schiller's correspondence we are pained by the sight sordid cares, and anxious struggles for existence. He is bad health, in difficult circumstances. We see him forced make literature a trade; and it is a bad one. We see hi anxious to do hack-work, and translations, for a few dolla quite cheered by the prospect of getting such work; nay, gl to farm it out to other writers, who will do it for less than receives. We see him animated with high aspirations, a depressed by cares. He too is struggling through the rebe lious epoch of youth, but has not yet attained the clearness manhood; and no external aids come to help him through t struggle. Goethe, on the contrary, never knew such care All his life he had been shielded from the depressing influen of poverty; and now he has leisure, affluence, renown, soci position—little from *without* to make him unhappy. Whe Schiller therefore thought of all this, he must have felt th fate had been a niggard stepmother to him, as she had been lavish mother to his rival.

Yet Goethe had his sorrows, too, though not of the sa kind. He bore within him the flame of genius, a flame whi consumes while it irradiates. His struggles were with hi self, and not with circumstances. He felt himself a strang in the land. Few understood his language; none understo his aims. He withdrew into himself.

There is one point which must be noticed in this positi of the two poets, namely, that however great Schiller may now esteemed, and was esteemed by Goethe after awhile,

was not at this moment regarded with anything beyond the feeling usually felt for a rising young author. His early works had indeed a wide popularity; but so had the works of Klinger, Maler Müller, Lenz, Kotzebue, and others, who never conquered the great critics; and Schiller was so unrecognised at this time that, on coming to Weimar, he complains, with surprise as much as with offended self-love, that Herder seemed to know nothing of him beyond his name, not having apparently read one of his works. And Goethe, in the official paper which he drew up recommending Schiller to the Jena professorship, speaks of him as "a Herr Friedrich Schiller, author of an historical work on the Netherlands." So that not only was Schiller's tendency antipathetic to all Goethe then prized, he was not even in that position which commands the respect of antagonists; and Goethe considered Art too profoundly important in the development of mankind, for differences of tendency to be overlooked as unimportant.

CHAPTER VIII

CHRISTIANE VULPIUS

One day early in July, 1788, Goethe, walking in the much-loved park, was accosted by a fresh, young, bright-looking girl, who, with many reverences, handed him a petition. He looked into the bright eyes of the petitioner, and then, in a conciliated mood, looked at the petition, which entreated the great poet to exert his influence to procure a post for a young author, then living at Jena by the translation of French and Italian stories. This young author was Vulpius, whose *Rinaldo Rinaldini* has doubtless made some of my readers shudder in their youth. His robber romances were at one time very popular; but his name is now only rescued from oblivion, because he was the brother of that Christiane who handed the petition to Goethe, and who thus took the first step on the path which led to their marriage. Christiane is on many accounts an interesting figure to those who are interested in the biography of Goethe; and the love she excited, no less than the devotedness with which for eight-and-twenty years she served him, deserve a more tender memory than has befallen her.

Her father was one of those wretched beings whose drunken-

ness slowly but surely brings a whole family to want. H would sometimes sell the coat off his back for drink. Wh his children grew up, they contrived to get away from hi and to support themselves: the son by literature, the daughte by making artificial flowers,[1] woollen work, &c. It is usua said that Christiane was utterly uneducated, and the epigra matic pen glibly records that "Goethe married his servan She never was his servant. Nor was she uneducated. H social position indeed was very humble, as the foregoing in cations suggest: but that she was not uneducated is plain seen in the facts, of which there can be no doubt, name that for her were written the *Roman Elegies*, and the *Me morphoses of Plants;* and that in her company Goethe pursu his optical and botanical researches. How much she und stood of these researches we cannot know: but it is certa that, unless she had shown a lively comprehension, he wou never have persisted in talking of them to her. Their time, says, was not spent only in caresses, but also in rational talk

Wird doch nicht immer geküsst, es wird vernünftig gesprochen.

This is decisive. Throughout his varied correspondence always see him presenting different subjects to different mind treating of topics in which his correspondents are intereste not dragging forward topics which merely interest *him;* a among the wide range of subjects he had mastered, there we many upon which he might have conversed with Christiane, preference to science, had she shown any want of comprehe sion of scientific phenomena. There is one of the *Elegies*, t eighth, which in six lines gives us a distinct idea of the so of cleverness and the sort of beauty which she possessed; cleverness not of the kind recognised by schoolmasters, b cause it does not display itself in aptitude for book-learnin a beauty not of the kind recognised by conventional tast because it wants the conventional regularity of feature.

Wenn du mir sagst, du habest als Kind, Geliebte, den Menschen
Nicht gefallen, und dich habe die Mutter verschmäht,
Bis du grösser geworden und still dich entwickelt; ich glaub' es:
Gerne denk' ich mir dich als ein besonderes Kind.
Fehlet Bildung und Farbe, doch auch der Blüthe des Weinstocks,
Wenn die Beere, gereift, Menschen und Götter entzückt.[2]

Surely the poet's word is to be taken in such a case?

[1] This detail will give the reader a clue to the poem *Der neue Pausias.*

[2] "When you tell me, dearest, that as a child you were not admired, a even your mother scorned you, till you grew up and silently developed yo

While, however, rectifying a general error, let me not fall into the opposite extreme. Christiane had her charm; but she was not a highly gifted woman. She was not a Frau von Stein, capable of being the companion and the sharer of his highest aspirations. Quick motherwit, a lively spirit, a loving heart, and great aptitude for domestic duties, she undoubtedly possessed; she was gay, enjoying, fond of pleasure even to excess, and—as may be read in the poems which she inspired—was less the mistress of his Mind than of his Affections. Her golden-brown locks, laughing eyes, ruddy cheeks, kiss-provoking lips, small and gracefully rounded figure, gave her "the appearance of a young Dionysos."[1] Her *naïveté*, gaiety and enjoying temperament, completely fascinated Goethe, who recognised in her one of those free, healthy specimens of Nature which education had not distorted with artifice. She was like a child of the sensuous Italy he had just quitted with so much regret; and there are few poems in any language which approach the passionate gratitude of those in which he recalls the happiness she gave him.

Why did he not marry her at once? His dread of marriage has already been shown; and to this abstract dread there must be added the great disparity of station: a disparity so great that not only did it make the *liaison* scandalous, it made Christiane herself reject the offer of marriage. Stahr reports that persons now living have heard her declare that it was her own fault her marriage was so long delayed; and certain it is that when—Christmas 1789—she bore him a child (August von Goethe, to whom the Duke stood godfather), he took her with her mother and sister to live in his house, and always regarded the connection as a marriage. But however he may have regarded it, Public Opinion has not forgiven this defiance of social laws. The world blamed him loudly; even his admirers cannot think of the connection without pain. "The Nation," says Schäfer, "has never forgiven its greatest poet for this rupture with Law and Custom; nothing has stood so much in the way of a right appreciation of his moral character, nothing has created more false judgments on the tendency of his writings than his half-marriage."

But let us be just. While no one can refrain from deploring

elf; I can quite believe it. I can readily imagine you as a peculiar child. f the blossoms of the vine are wanting in colour and form, the grapes once ipe are the delight of god and men."

[1] So says Madame Schopenhauer, *not* a prejudiced witness.

that Goethe, so eminently needing a pure domestic lif should not have found a wife whom he could avow, one wh would in all senses have been a wife to him, the mistress his house, the companion of his life; on the other hand, n one who knows the whole circumstances can refrain from co fessing that there was also a bright side to this dark episod Having indicated the dark side, and especially its social effec we have to consider what happiness it brought him at a tim when he was most lonely, most unhappy. It gave him th joys of paternity, for which his heart yearned. It gave him faithful and devoted affection. It gave him one to look aft his domestic existence, and it gave him a peace in that exis ence which hitherto he had sought in vain.

> Oftmals hab' ich geirrt, und habe mich wieder gefunden,
> Aber glücklicher nie; nun ist diess Mädchen mein Glück!
> Ist auch dieses ein Irrthum, so schont mich, ihr klügeren Götter,
> Und benehmt mir ihn erst drüben am kalten Gestad.[1]

There is a letter still extant (unpublished) written ten yea after their first acquaintance, in which, like a passionate love he regrets not having taken something of hers on his journ —even her slipper—that he might feel less lonely![2] To ha excited such love, Christiane must have been a very differe woman from that which it is the fashion in Germany to descri her as being. In conclusion, let it be added that his Moth not only expressed herself perfectly satisfied with his choic received Christiane as a daughter, and wrote affectionate to her, but refused to listen to the officious meddlers wh tried to convince her of the scandal which the connectio occasioned.

The *Roman Elegies* are doubly interesting: first, as expre sions of his feelings; secondly, as perhaps the most perfe poems of the kind in all literature. In them we see how th journey to Italy had saturated his mind with the spirit ancient Art. Yet while reproducing the past with matchle felicity, he is, at the same time, thoroughly *original*. Nowhe in Greek or Roman literature do I remember this union

[1] "Often have I erred, and always found the path again, but never fou myself happier: now in this maiden lies my happiness! If this, too, is error, O spare me the knowledge, ye gods, and let me only discover it beyo the grave."

[2] My accomplished German translator here adds some passages fr Goethe's correspondence with Herder, which indicate the fervour of t passion Christiane excited and sustained.

great thoughts, giving grandeur to the verse, with individual passion, giving it intensity. They are not simply elegies—out-pourings of individual feelings—they are *Roman* elegies, and mirror a world. In modern poems all classical recollections and allusions are for the most part frigid and laboured, springing from study; not the spontaneous forms of poetic expression. In these *Roman Elegies* the classic world lives again; indeed at times one can almost say he is more antique than the ancients.[1] The thirteenth elegy, *Amor der Schalk*, for example, is in Anacreon's manner, but far above anything we have of Anacreon. Antique also is the direct unmisgiving sensuousness of the poet, and his unperplexed earnestness of passion, an earnestness which does not absorb the other activities of his nature, but allies itself with them. Thus in the fifth elegy there is a picture of the most vivid sensuousness, aiding, not thwarting, the poetical activity. What a poem, what a world of emotion and thought these lines suggest:

> Ueberfällt sie der Schlaf, lieg' ich und denke mir viel.
> Oftmals hab' ich auch schon in ihren Armen gedichtet,
> Und des Hexameters Mass leise mit fingernder Hand
> Ihr auf dem Rücken gezählt. Sie athmet in lieblichem Schlummer,
> Und es durchglühet ihr Hauch mir bis ins Tiefste die Brust.

This picture of the poet murmuring verses while his beloved sleeps softly by his side; warmed by her breath, yet with fingering hand marking the rhythm of verse; is typical of the whole story of Goethe's love. Passion fed, it never stifled the flame of his genius. He enjoyed; but in the brief pauses of enjoyment the presence of high aims was felt.

The blending of individual passion with classic forms, making the past live again in the feeling of the present, may be illustrated by the following example:

> Lass dich, Geliebte, nicht reu'n, dass du mir so schnell dich ergeben!
> Glaub' es, ich denke nicht frech, denke nicht niedrig von dir.
> Vielfach wirken die Pfeile des Amor: einige ritzen
> Und vom schleichenden Gift kranket auf Jahre das Herz.
> Aber mächtig befiedert, mit frisch geschliffener schärfe,
> Dringen die andern ins Mark, zünden behende das Blut.
> *In der heroischen Zeit, da Götter und Göttinnen liebten,*
> *Folgte Begierde dem Blick, folgte Genuss der Begier.*
> Glaubst du, es habe sich lange die Göttin der Liebe besonnen,
> Als in Idäischen Hain einst ihr Anchises gefiel?

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1 Schlegel happily says of them, "they enrich Roman poetry with German poems." *Charakteristiken und Kritiken*, ii. p. 199.

Hätte Luna gesäumt, den schönen Schläfer zu küssen.
O, so hätt' ihn geschwind, neidend, Aurora geweckt.[1]

Many of the finest passages are as antique in their directness of expression as in other qualities. He said justly to Eckermann, that Metre is a peculiar veil which clothes the nakedness of expression, and makes that admissible which in prose would be offensive, and which even in another lighter kind of Metre would be offensive. In the *Don Juan* stanza he says the material of the *Roman Elegies* would be indelicate. On the question how far a poet is justified in disregarding the conventional proprieties of his age in the portrayal of feeling, let Schiller be heard: "The laws of propriety are foreign to innocent nature; only the experience of corruption has given origin to them. But as soon as that corruption has taken place, and natural innocence has vanished from manners, the laws of propriety are sacred, and moral feeling will not offend them. They have the same validity in an artificial world as the laws of nature have in a world of innocence. But the very thing which constitutes the poet, is that he banishes from himself everything which reminds him of an artificial world, that he may restore nature in her primitive simplicity. And if he has done this, he is thereby absolved from all laws by which a perverted heart seeks security against itself. He is pure, he is innocent, and whatever is permitted to innocent nature is permitted also to him. If thou who readest and hearest him are no longer innocent, and if thou canst not even momentarily become so by his purifying presence, it is thy *misfortune* and not his; thou forsakest him, he did not sing for thee."

Had Goethe written nothing but the *Roman Elegies*, he would hold a first place among German poets. These elegies are, moreover, scarcely less interesting in their biographical

[1] In Mr. Theodore Martin's volume of privately printed poems and translations, the passage in the text is thus rendered:—

Blush not, my love, at the thought, thou yieldest so soon to my passion,
Trust me, I think it no shame—think it no vileness in thee!
Shafts from the quiver of Amor have manifold consequence. Some scratch
And the heart sickens for years with the insidious bane:
Others drawn home to the head, full plumed, and cruelly pointed,
Pierce to the marrow, and straight kindle the blood into flame.
In the heroical age, when goddess and god were the lovers,
Scarce did they look but they long'd, longing they rush'd to enjoy.
Think'st thou Love's goddess hung back, when deep in the forest of Ida,
She, with a thrill of delight, first her Anchises beheld?
Coyly had Luna delayed to fondle the beautiful sleeper,
Soon had Aurora in spite waken'd the boy from his dream.

significance. They speak plainly of the effect of Italy upon his mind. They speak eloquently of his love for Christiane. There are other tributes to her charms, and to the happiness she gave him; but were there no other tributes, these would suffice to show the injustice of the opinion which the malicious tongues of Weimar have thrown into currency respecting her; opinions, indeed, which received some countenance from her subsequent life, when she had lost youth and beauty, and when the faults of her nature had acquired painful prominence. It is Goethe's misfortune with posterity that he is mostly present to our minds as the calm old man, seldom as the glorious youth. The majority of busts, portraits, and biographic details, are of the late period of his career. In like manner, it is the misfortune of his wife that testimonies about her come mostly from those who only saw her when the grace and charm of youth had given place to a coarse and corpulent age. But the biographer's task is to ascertain by diligent inquiry what is the truth at the various epochs of a career, not limiting himself to one epoch; and as I have taken great pains to represent the young Goethe, so also have I tried to rescue the young Christiane from the falsifications of gossip, and the misrepresentations derived from judging her youth by her old age.

It has already been intimated that Weimar was loud in disapprobation of this new liaison; although it had uttered no word against the liaison with the Frau von Stein. The great offence seems to have been his choosing one beneath him in rank. A chorus of indignation rose. It produced the final rupture between him and the Frau von Stein. Here is a letter wherein he answers her reproaches: "If you could but listen to me, I would gladly tell you, that although your reproaches pain me at the moment, they leave no trace of anger in my heart against you. Moreover, I can set them right. If you have much to bear from me, it is but just that I should also bear with you. It is much better that we should come to a friendly understanding, than strive constantly to come to unanimity, and when that striving fails, separate again. It is impossible to clear myself with you, because, on every reckoning, I must remain your debtor. But if we consider how much we have all to bear from each other, we shall still, dearest, forgive one another. Farewell, and love—me. On the first opportunity you shall hear more about the pretty secrets."

The pretty secrets here alluded to are probably about Christiane. The letter produced a reply, which called from him the

following: "Thanks for thy letter, although it has troubled me in more ways than one. I delayed answering it, because it is difficult in such cases to be sincere, and not give pain. . . . What I left behind in Italy I will not now repeat; you have already repulsed my confidence on that subject in a manner sufficiently unfriendly. When I first returned, you were, unhappily, in a peculiar mood, and I honestly confess the way in which you received me was excessively painful. I saw Herder and the duchess depart for Italy; they urgently offered me a place in their carriage, but I stayed behind for the sake of that friend for whom I had returned; and this, too, was at a moment when I was incessantly and sarcastically told that I might as well have remained in Italy,—that I had no sympathy, and so on. And all this before there was a hint of the liaison which now seems to offend you so much. And what is this liaison? Who is beggared by it? Who makes any claims on the feelings I give the poor creature? Who, on the hours I pass in her society? Ask Fritz, ask the Herders, ask any one who knows me intimately, whether I am less sympathetic, less active, or less friendly than before? Whether I do not rather now, for the first time, rightly belong to them and to society. And it must be by a miracle indeed if I should have forgotten the best, the deepest relation of all, that, namely, to thee. How vividly I have felt my disposition to be the same, whenever it has happened that we have talked on some interesting subject! But I freely confess that the manner in which you have treated me hitherto is not to be endured. When I was inclined to talk, you shut my lips; when I was communicative about Italy, you complained of my indifference; when I was active for my friends, you reproached me with coldness and neglect of you. You criticised every look, blamed every movement, and constantly made me feel ill at ease. How then can openness and confidence continue, while you repulse me with predetermined ill humour? I would add more, did I not fear that in your present mood it might irritate you more than it would tend to reconcile us. Unhappily you have long despised my advice with reference to coffee, and have adopted a regimen eminently injurious to your health. As if it were not already difficult enough to conquer certain moral impressions, you strengthen your hypochondria by physical aids, the evil influence of which you have long acknowledged, and out of love to me had for some time relinquished, to the obvious improvement of your health. May the present journey do you good!

do not quite relinquish the hope that you will again learn to know me. Farewell. Fritz is happy, and visits me constantly."

Over this letter she wrote *O!!!* It was a terrible letter to receive, and she doubtless was indignant at what she conceived to be its injustice. She had been "misunderstood." People always *are* misunderstood in such cases. They are blameless, but their conduct is misrepresented. They are conscious of having felt precisely the reverse of what is attributed to them; and they wonder that they are not known better.

Shifting our position, and reading the letter less from the Frau von Stein's point of view, than from the point of view of bystanders, we read in it the amplest justification of the writer. We see how intensely unamiable must have been her manner of receiving him. Her subsequent conduct but too well confirms this impression. She showed herself worse than unamiable. The final passage of the letter alluding to her hypochondria being aggravated by coffee and bad diet, reads like an impertinence; but those who know how serious he was in his objections to the use of coffee, and how clearly he perceived the influence of physical well-being on moral health, will not be surprised at it. At any rate, whatever accents of harshness may be heard in this letter, there is no mistaking the pain in it; and a week after, he writes the following:

"It is not easy for me to write a letter with more pain than the one I last wrote to thee, which was probably as unpleasant for thee to read as for me to write. Meanwhile at least the lips have been opened, and I hope that never may we henceforth keep them closed against each other. I have had no greater happiness than my confidence in thee, which formerly was unlimited, and since I have been unable to use it, I have become another man, and must in future still more become so. I do not complain of my present condition, I have managed to make myself at home in it, and hope to keep so, although the climate once more affects me, and will sooner or later make me unfit for much that is good. But when I think of the damp summer and severe winter, and of the combination of outward circumstances which makes existence here difficult, I know not which way to turn.[1] I say this as much in relation to *thee* as to myself, and assure thee that it

[1] This is a paraphrastic abbreviation of the passage, which if given as in the original would need long collateral explanations.

pains me infinitely to give thee pain under such circumstances I will say nothing in my own excuse. But I would beg thee to help me so that the relation which thou objectest to may not become still more objectionable, but remain as it is Give me once more thy confidence; see the case from a natural point of view, let me speak to thee quietly and reasonably about it, and I dare to hope that everything between us will once more be pure and friendly. Thou hast seen my mother and made her happy; let my return make me happy also."

He offered friendship in vain; he had wounded the self-love of a vain woman; there is a relentless venom in ignoble minds, when the self-love is wounded, which poisons friendship and destroys all gratitude. It was not enough for the Frau von Stein that he had loved her so many years with a rare devotion it was not enough that he had been more to her child than its own father was; it was not enough that now the inevitable change had come, he still felt tenderness and affection for her, grateful for what she *had* been to him; the one fact, that he had ceased to love her, expunged the whole past. A nature with any nobleness never forgets that once it loved and once was happy in that love; the generous heart is grateful in its memories. The heart of the Frau von Stein had no memory but for its wounds. She spoke with petty malice of the "low person" who had usurped her place; rejected Goethe's friendship; affected to pity him; and circulated gossip about his beloved. They were forced to meet; but they met no longer as before. To the last he thought and spoke of her tenderly; and I know on unexceptionable authority that when there was anything appetising brought to table, which he thought would please her, he often said "Send some of this to the Frau von Stein."

There is a letter of hers extant which shows what was the state of her feelings after a lapse of twelve years. It may find a place here as a conclusive document with which to wind up the strange episode of their history. It is addressed to her son. Three passages are italicised by way of emphasis, to call attention to the spirit animating the writer.

"WEIMAR, *January 12th*, 1801.

"I did not know that our *former friend Goethe*, was still so dear to me, that a severe illness, from which he has been suffering for nine days, would so deeply affect me. It is

convulsive cough accompanied with erysipelas; he can lie in no bed, and is obliged always to be kept in a standing posture, otherwise he would be choked. His neck, as well as his face, is swollen and full of internal blisters, his left eye stands out like a great nut, and discharges blood and matter; he is often delirious, inflammation of the brain was feared, so he was bled, and had mustard foot-baths, which made his feet swell, and seemed to do him some good; but last night the convulsive cough returned, I fear from his having been shaved yesterday; my letter will tell you either of his being better or of his death—I shall not send it before. The Schillers and I have already shed many tears over him in the last few days; I deeply regret now that *when he wished to visit me on New Year's Day, I, alas! because I lay ill with headache, excused myself*, and now I shall perhaps never see him again.

"14*th*. Goethe is better, but the twenty-first day must be got over; between this and then something else might happen to him, because the inflammation has injured something in his head and his diaphragm. Yesterday he ate with great appetite some soup which I had sent him; his eye, too, is better, but he is very melancholy, and they say he wept for three hours; especially he weeps when he sees August, who has in the meantime taken refuge with me: I am sorry for the poor boy, he was dreadfully distressed, but he is already accustomed to drink away his troubles; he lately in *a club belonging to his mother's class*, drank seventeen glasses of champagne, and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping him from wine when he was with me.

"15*th*. Goethe sent to me to-day, thanked me for my sympathy, and hoped he should soon be better; the doctors consider him out of danger, but his recovery will take a long time yet."

Who could believe that this was written by one passionately loved for ten years, and written of one who was thought to be dying? Even here her hatred to Christiane cannot restrain itself.

CHAPTER IX

THE POET AS A MAN OF SCIENCE

To the immense variety of his studies in Art and Science must now be added a fragmentary acquaintance with the philosophy of Kant. He had neither the patience nor the delight in metaphysical abstractions requisite to enable him to master the Critique of Pure Reason; but he read here and there in it, as he read in Spinoza; and was especially interested in the æsthetical portions of the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft.* This was a means of bringing him nearer to Schiller, who still felt the difference between them to be profound; as we see in what he wrote to Körner: "His philosophy draws too much of its material from the world of the senses, where I only draw from the soul. His mode of presentation is altogether too sensuous for me. But his spirit works and seeks in every direction, striving to create a whole, and that makes him in my eyes a great man."

Remarkable indeed is the variety of his strivings. After completing *Tasso*, we find him writing on the Roman Carnival, and on Imitation of Nature, and studying with strange ardour the mysteries of botany and optics. In poetry it is only necessary to name the *Roman Elegies*, to show what productivity in that direction he was capable of; although, in truth, his poetical activity was then in subordination to his activity in science. He was, socially, in an unpleasant condition; and, as he subsequently confessed, would never have been able to hold out, had it not been for his studies in Art and Nature. In all times these were his refuge and consolation.

On Art, the world listened to him attentively. On Science, the world would not listen; but turned away in silence, sometimes in derision. In both he was only an amateur. He had no executive ability in Painting or Sculpture to give authority to his opinions, yet his word was listened to with respect, often with enthusiasm.[1] But while artists and the public admitted that a man of genius might speak with some authority

[1] RAUCH, the sculptor, told me that among the influences of his life, he reckons the enthusiasm which Goethe's remarks on Art excited in him. Many others would doubtless say the same.

although an amateur, men of science were not willing that a man of genius should speak on *their* topics, until he had passed College Examinations and received his diploma. The veriest blockhead who had received a diploma, considered himself entitled to sneer at the poet who "dabbled in comparative anatomy." Nevertheless that poet made discoveries and enunciated laws, the importance of which the professional sneerer could not even appreciate, so far did they transcend his knowledge.

Professional men have a right to be suspicious of the amateur, for they know how arduous a training is required by Science. But while it is just that they should be *suspicious*, it is absurd for them to shut their eyes. When the amateur brings forward crudities, which he announces to be discoveries, their scorn may be legitimate enough; but when he happens to bring forward a discovery, and they treat it as crudity, their scorn becomes self-stultification. If their professional training gives them superiority, that superiority should give them greater readiness of apprehension. The truth is, however, that ordinary professional training gives them nothing of the sort. The mass of men, simply because they are a mass of men, receive with difficulty every new idea, unless it lies in the track of their own knowledge; and this opposition, which every new idea must vanquish, becomes tenfold greater when the idea is promulgated from a source not in itself authoritative.

But whence comes this authority? From the respect paid to genius and labour. The man of genius who is known to have devoted much time to the consideration of any subject is justly supposed to be more competent to speak on that subject than one who has paid little attention to it. No amount of genius, no amount of study, can secure a man from his native fallibility; but, after adequate study, there is a presumption in his favour; and it is this presumption which constitutes authority. In the case of a poet who claims to be heard on a question of science, we naturally assume that he has not given the requisite labour; and on such topics genius without labour carries no authority. But if his researches show that the labour *has* been given, we must then cease to regard him as a poet, and admit him to the citizenship of science. No one disputes the immense glory of a Haller, or a Redi, on the ground of their being poets. They were poets and scientific workers; and so was Goethe. This

would perhaps have been more readily acknowledged if h had walked in the well-beaten tracks of scientific thought but he opened new tracks, and those who might, perhaps have accepted him as a colleague, were called upon to accep him as a guide. Human nature could not stand this. Th presumption against a poet was added to the presumptio against novelty; singly each of these would have been a obstacle to a ready acceptance; united they were insuperable

When Goethe wrote his excellent little treatise on th *Metamorphoses of Plants*,[1] he had to contend against th twofold obstacle of resistance to novelty, and his own reputa tion. Had an obscure professor published this work, it novelty would have sufficed to render it unacceptable; bu the obscurest name in Germany would have had a *prestig* greater than the name of the great poet. All novelty is *prim facie* suspicious; none but the young welcome it; for is no every new discovery a kind of slur on the sagacity of thos who overlooked it? And can novelty in science, promulgate by a poet, be worth the trouble of refutation? The pro fessional authorities decided that it could not. The publishe of Goethe's works, having consulted a botanist, declined t undertake the printing of the *Metamorphoses of Plants*. Th work was only printed at last because an enterprising book seller hoped thereby to gain the publication of the other works When it appeared, the public saw in it a pretty piece of fancy nothing more. Botanists shrugged their shoulders, and re gretted the author had not reserved his imagination for hi poems. No one believed in the theory, not even his attache friends. He had to wait many years before seeing it generall accepted, and it was then only accepted because great botanist had made it acceptable. A considerable authority on thi matter has told us how long the theory was neglected, an how "depuis dix ans (written in 1838) il n'a peut-être pas ét publié un seul livre d'organographie, ou de botanique descrip tive, qui ne porte l'empreinte des idées de cet écrivai illustre."[2] It was the fact of the theory being announced b the author of *Werther* which mainly retarded its acceptance but the fact also that the theory was leagues in advance of th state of science in that day, must not be overlooked. For is curious that the leading idea had been briefly yet explicitl

[1] He has also a poem on this subject, but it is scarcely more poetical.

[2] AUGUSTE ST. HILAIRE: *Comptes Rendus des Séances de l'Acad.* vii. 43 See also his work *Morphologie Végétale*, vol. i. p. 15.

announced as early as 1759, by Caspar Friedrich Wolff, in his now deservedly celebrated *Theoria Generationis*, and again, in 1764, in his *Theorie von der Generation*.[1] I shall have to recur to Wolff; at present it need only be noted that even *his* professional authority and remarkable power could not secure the slightest attention from botanists for the morphological theory—a proof that the age was not ripe for its acceptance.

A few of the eminent botanists began, after the lapse of some years, to recognise the discovery. Thus Kieser declared it to be "certainly the vastest conception which vegetable physiology had for a long time known." Voigt expressed his irritation at the blindness of the botanists in refusing to accept it. Nees von Esenbeck, one of the greatest names in the science, wrote in 1818, "Theophrastus is the creator of modern botany. Goethe is its tender father, to whom it will raise looks full of love and gratitude, as soon as it grows out of its infancy, and acquires the sentiment which it owes to him who has raised it to so high a position." And Sprengel, in his History of Botany, frequently mentions the theory. In one place he says, "The *Metamorphoses* had a meaning so profound, joined to such great simplicity, and was so fertile in consequences, that we must not be surprised if it stood in need of multiplied commentaries, and if many botanists failed to see its importance."

It is now, and has been for some years, the custom to insert a chapter on Metamorphosis in every work which pretends to a high scientific character.

"For a half century," says Goethe in the History of the Botanical Studies, "I have been known as a poet in my own country and abroad. No one thinks of refusing me that talent. But it is not generally known, it has not been taken into consideration, that I have also occupied myself seriously through many years with the physical and physiological phenomena of Nature, observing them with the perseverance which passion alone can give. Thus when my essay on the development of plants, published nearly forty years before, fixed the attention of botanists in Switzerland and France, there seemed no expression for the astonishment at the fact of a poet thus going out of his route to make a discovery so

[1] I have only been able to procure this latter work, which is a more popular and excursive exposition of the principles maintained in the Inaugural Dissertation of 1759.

important. It is to combat this false notion that I have written the history of my studies, to show that a great part of my life has been devoted to Natural History, for which I had a passion. It is by no sudden and unexpected inspiration of genius, but through long prosecuted studies, I arrived at my results. I might doubtless have accepted the honour which men wished to pay my sagacity, and in secret rejoiced in it. But as it is equally pernicious in science to keep exclusively to facts, or exclusively to abstract theories, I have deemed it my duty to write, for serious men, the detailed history of my studies."

He was not *much* hurt at the reception of his work. He knew how unwilling men are to accord praise to any one who aims at success in different spheres, and found it perfectly natural they should be so unwilling; adding, however, that "an energetic nature feels itself brought into the world for *its own development, and not for the approbation of the public.*"

We shall have occasion to consider his theory of Metamorphosis hereafter; at present let us follow the biographical path, and note his confession that some of the happiest moments of his life were those devoted to his botanical studies. "They have acquired an inestimable value in my eyes," he says, "because to them I owe the most beautiful of all the relations which my lucky star shone on. To them I owe the friendship of Schiller."

Side by side with botanical and anatomical studies must be placed his optical studies. A more illustrative contrast can scarcely be found than is afforded by the history of his efforts in these two directions. They throw light upon scientific Method, and they throw light on his scientific qualities and defects. If we have hitherto followed him with sympathy and admiration, we must now be prepared to follow him with that feeling of pain which rises at the sight of a great intellect struggling in a false direction. His botanical and anatomical studies were of that high character which makes one angry at their cold reception; his optical studies were of a kind to puzzle and to irritate the professional public.

He has written the history of these studies also. From youth upwards he had been prone to theorise on painting, led thereto, as he profoundly remarks, by the very absence of talent for painting. It was not necessary for him to theorise on poetry; he had within him the creative power. It was necessary for him to theorise on painting, because he wanted

"by reason and insight to fill up the deficiences of nature." In Italy these theories found abundant stimulus. With his painter friends he discussed colour and colouring, trying by various paradoxes to strike out a truth. The friends were all deplorably vague in their notions of colour. The critical treatises were equally vague. Nowhere could he find firm ground. He began to think of the matter from the opposite side—instead of trying to solve the artists' problem, he strove to solve the scientific problem. He asked himself, What is colour? Men of science referred him to Newton; but Newton gave him little help. Professor Büttner lent him some prisms and optical instruments, to try the prescribed experiments. He kept the prisms a long while, but made no use of them. Büttner wrote to him for his instruments; Goethe neither sent them back, nor set to work with them. He delayed from day to day, occupied with other things. At last Büttner became uneasy, and sent for the prisms, saying they should be lent again at a future period, but that at any rate he must have them returned. Forced thus to part with them, yet unwilling to send them back without making one effort, he told the messenger to wait, and taking up a prism, looked through it at the white wall of his room, expecting to see the whole wall coloured in various tints, according to the Newtonian statement. To his astonishment, he saw nothing of the kind. He saw that the wall remained as white as before, and that only there, where an opaque interfered, could a more or less decisive colour be observed; that the window frames were most coloured, while the light grey heaven without showed no trace of colour. "It needed very little meditation to discover that to produce colour a *limit* was necessary, and instinctively I exclaimed, 'Newton's theory is false!'" There could be no thought of sending back the prisms at such a juncture; so he wrote to Büttner begging for a longer loan, and set to work in real earnest.

This was an unhappy commencement. He began with a false conception of Newton's theory, and thought he was overthrowing Newton when, in fact, he was combating his own error. The Newtonian theory does *not* say that a white surface seen through a prism appears coloured, but that it appears white, its edges only coloured. The fancied discovery of Newton's error stung him like a gadfly. He multiplied experiments, turned the subject incessantly over in his mind, and instead of going the simple way to work, and learning the

a, b, c, of the science, tried the very longest of all short cut namely, experiment on insufficient knowledge. He made white disc on a black ground, and this, seen through th prism, gave him the spectrum, as in the Newtonian theory but he found that a black disc on a white ground also pro duced the same effect. "'If Light,' said I to myself, 'resolve itself into various colours in the first case; then must Darkne also resolve itself into various colours in this second case.' And thus he came to the conclusion that Colour is not con tained in Light, but is the product of an intermingling of Ligh and Darkness.

"Having no experience in such matters, and not knowin the direction I ought to take, I addressed myself to a Physicis of repute, begging him to verify the results I had arrived a I had already told him my doubts of the Newtonian hypothesi and hoped to see him at once share my conviction. But ho great was my surprise when he assured me that the phenomeno I spoke of was already known, and perfectly explained by th Newtonian theory. In vain I protested and combated hi arguments, he held stolidly to the *credo*, and told me to repea my experiments in a *camera obscura*."

Instead of quieting him, this rebuff only turned him awa from all Physicists, that is, from all men who had specia knowledge on the subject, and made him pursue in silenc his own path. Friends were amused and interested by h experiments; their ignorance made them ready adepts. Th Duchess Luise showed especial interest; and to her he afte wards dedicated his *Farbenlehre*. The duke also shared th enthusiasm. The Duke of Gotha placed at his disposal magnificent laboratory. Prince August sent him splendi prisms from England. Princes and poetasters believed h was going to dethrone Newton; men of science only laughe at his pretension, and would not pay his theory the honour a refutation. One fact he records as very noticeable, namel that he could count Anatomists, Chemists, Littérateurs, an Philosophers, such as Loder, Sömmering, Göttling, Wol Forster, Schelling (and, subsequently, Hegel), among h adherents; but not one Physicist—*hingegen keinen Physiker* Nor does he, in recording this fact, see that it is destructiv of his pretensions.

What claim had Anatomists, Littérateurs, and Philosophe to be heard in such a controversy? Who would listen to mathematician appealing to the testimony of zoologists again

the whole body of mathematicians past and present? There is this much, however, to be said for Goethe: he had already experienced neglect from professional authorities when he discovered the intermaxillary bone, and when, in the *Metamorphoses of Plants*, he laid before them a real discovery, the truth of which he profoundly felt. He was prepared therefore for a similar disregard of his claims when he not only produced a new theory, but attacked the highest scientific authority. He considered that Newtonians looked on him as a natural enemy. He thought them steadfastly bent on maintaining established prejudice. He thought they were a guild united against all innovation by common interest and common ignorance. Their opposition never made him pause; their arguments never made him swerve. He thought them profoundly in error when they imagined optics to be a part of mathematics; and as he did not understand mathematics, he could not appreciate their arguments.

His *Beiträge zur Optik*, which appeared in 1791, was a sort of feeler thrown out to the great public. The public was utterly unsympathising. The ignorant had no interest in such matters, and certainly would not address themselves to a poet for instruction; the physicists saw that he was wrong. "Everywhere," he says, "I found incredulity as to my competence in such a matter; everywhere a sort of repulsion at my efforts; and the more learned and well-informed the men were, the more decided was their opposition."

For years and years he continued his researches with a patience worthy of admiration. Opposition moved him not: it rather helped to increase his obstinacy. It extorted from him expressions of irritability and polemical bad taste, which astound us in one elsewhere so calm and tolerant. Perhaps, as Kingsley once suggested to me, he had a vague feeling that his conclusions were not sound, and felt the jealousy incident to imperfect conviction. Where his conviction was perfect, he was calm. The neglect of his Metamorphoses—the denial of his discovery of the intermaxillary bone—the indifference with which his essays on Comparative Anatomy were treated—all this he bore with philosophic serenity. But on the *Farbenlehre* he was always sensitive, and in old age ludicrously so. Eckermann records a curious conversation, wherein he brings forward a fact he has observed, which contradicts the theory of colours; and Goethe not only grows angry, but refuses to admit the fact. In this matter of Colour he showed himself morally

weak, as well as intellectually weak. "As for what I have done as a poet," said the old man once, "I take no pride in it whatever. Excellent poets have lived at the same time with myself; more excellent poets have lived before me, and will come after me. But that in my century I am the only person who knows the truth in the difficult science of colours —of that, I say, I am not a little proud."

The reader will doubtless be curious to know something of this Theory of Colours; and although it must necessarily appear greatly to its disadvantage in the brief abstract for which alone I can find space, an abstract without the numerous illustrations and experiments which give the theory a plausible aspect, yet the kernel of the matter will appear.

The Newtonian theory is that white light is composed of the seven prismatic colours, *i.e.* rays having different degrees of refrangibility. Goethe says it is not composed at all, but is the simplest and most homogeneous thing we know.[1] It is absurd to call it composed of *colours*, for every light which has taken a colour is darker than colourless light. Brightness cannot therefore be a compound of darkness. There are but two pure colours, *blue* and *yellow*, both of which have a tendency to become *red*, through *violet* and *orange;* there are also two mixtures, *green* and *purple*. Every other colour is a degree of one of these, or is impure. Colours originate in the modification of Light by outward circumstances. They are not developed *out* of Light, but *by* it. For the phenomena of Colour, there is demanded Light and Darkness. Nearest the Light appears a colour we name *yellow;* nearest the Darkness, a colour we name *blue*. Mix these two and you have *green*.

Starting from the fundamental error of the simplicity of Light, Goethe undertakes to explain all the phenomena of Colour, by means of what he calls the *Opaques*—the media. He maintains that on the one hand there is Light, and on the other Darkness; if a semi-transparent medium be brought between the two, from these contrasts and this medium Colours are developed, contrasted in like manner, but soon through a reciprocal relation tending to a point of reunion.

[1] "Let us thank the gods," exclaims Schelling, "that they have emancipated us from the Newtonian spectrum (*spectrum* truly!) of composed light. We owe this to the genius to whom our debt is already so large."—*Zeitschrift, für specul. Philos.* ii. p. 60. To the same effect Hegel in his *Encyclopädie der philos. Wissenschaften.*

The highest degree of Light seen through a medium very slightly thickened appears *yellow*. If the density of the medium be increased, or if its volume become greater, the light will gradually assume a *yellow-red*, which deepens at last to a *ruby*.

The highest degree of Darkness seen through a semi-transparent medium, which is itself illuminated by a light striking on it, gives a *blue* colour; which becomes paler as the density of the medium is increased; but on the contrary becomes darker and deeper as the medium becomes more transparent. In the least degree of dimness short of absolute transparency, the deep *blue* becomes the most beautiful *violet*.

There are many interesting facts adduced in illustration. Thus, smoke appears yellow or red before a light ground, blue before a dark ground; the blue colour, at the under part of a candle-flame, is also a case of blue seen opposite a dark ground. Light transmitted through the air is yellow, orange or red, according to the density of the air; Darkness transmitted through the air is blue, as is the case of the sky, or distant mountains.

He tells a curious anecdote in illustration of this blueness of darkness. A painter had an old portrait of a theologian to clean; the wet sponge passing over the black velvet dress, suddenly changed it to a *light blue plush*. Puzzled at this truly remarkable phenomenon, and not understanding how light blue could be the ground of deep black, he was in great grief at the thought of having thus ruined the picture. The next morning, to his joy, he found the black velvet had resumed its pristine splendour. To satisfy his curiosity, he could not refrain from wetting a corner once more, and again he saw the *blue* appear. Goethe was informed of the phenomenon, which was once more produced, in his presence. "I explained it," he says, "by my doctrine of the semi-opaque medium. The original painter, in order to give additional depth to his black, may have passed some particular varnish over it; on being washed, this varnish imbibed some moisture, and hence became semi-opaque, in consequence of which the *black* beneath immediately appeared *blue*." The explanation is very ingenious; nor does the Edinburgh reviewer's answer seem to meet the question, when he says:[1] "As there is no gum or resin, or varnish of any kind that possesses the property of yielding blue or any other colour by being wetted, we have

[1] *Edin. Rev.* Oct. 1840, p. 117.

no doubt the varnish had been worn off, or else the picture never had been varnished." It is not a question of wetted varnish yielding blue, but of wetted varnish furnishing the medium through which black appears blue. His own explanation, however, is probably correct. He assumes that there was no varnish, and that the particles of bodies which produce blackness, on the usual theory, are smaller than those which produce blue or any other colour; and if we increase the size of the particles which produce blackness by the smallest quantity, they yield the *blue* colour described by Goethe. The action of the water swelled them a little, and thus gave them the size which fitted them to reflect *blue* rays.

The theory loses much of its seductive plausibility when thus reduced to its simplest expression. Let us, however, do the same for the Newtonian theory, and then estimate their comparative value. Newton assumes that white Light is a compound; and he proves this assumption by decomposing a beam of light into its elements. These elements are rays having different degrees of refrangibility, separable from each other by different media. Each ray produces its individual colour. Not only will the beam of white Light in passing through a prism be separated into its constituent rays, or colours, but these rays may be again collected by a large lens and, in being thus brought together, again reappear as white Light. There are few theories in science which present a more satisfactory union of logic and experiment.

It cannot be denied that Goethe's theory is also extremely plausible; and he has supported it with so many accurate experiments and admirable observations, that to this day it has not only found ardent advocates, even among men of science, though these are few, but has very sorely perplexed many Newtonians, who, relying on the mathematical accuracy of their own theory, have contemptuously dismissed Goethe's speculation instead of victoriously refuting it. His obstinacy was excusable, since believing himself to be in the right he challenged refutation, and no one picked up his gauntlet. They declined in contempt; he interpreted it as bigotry. He tried to get the French Academy to make a report on his work. This honour was withheld: Cuvier disdainfully declaring that such a work was not one to occupy an Academy. Delambre answering all solicitations with this phrase: "Des observations, des expériences, et surtout ne commençons pas par attaquer Newton." As if the *Farbenlehre* were not founded

on observations and experiments! as if the glory of Newton were to stand inviolate before all things! Goethe might well resent such treatment. If he was wrong in his theory, if his experiments were incomplete, why were these errors not pointed out? To contradict Newton might offer a presumption against the theory; but Newtonians were called upon not to explain the contradiction between Goethe and Newton, which was vociferously announced, but the contradiction between Goethe and Truth, which they contemptuously asserted.

As this is a branch of science in which I can pretend to no competence, and as I have met with no decisive refutation of Goethe which can be quoted here, I should consider it sufficient to say that the fact of the vast majority of physicists in Europe refusing to pay any attention to the *Farbenlehre*, although not in itself more than a presumption against that theory, is nevertheless a presumption so very strong as only to be set aside by stringently coercive evidence. Looking at the *Farbenlehre* from the impartial, if imperfect, point of view of an outsider, I should say that not only has Goethe manifestly misunderstood Newton, but has presented a theory which is based on a radical mistake. The mistake is that of treating Darkness as a positive quality, rather than as a simple negation of Light. By means of this Darkness, as a *co-operating agent* with Light, colours are said to arise. Stripped of all the ambiguities of language, the theory affirms that Light is itself perfectly colourless until mingled with various degrees of Nothing—or, in other words, until it suffers various diminutions; and with each diminution the colours become of a deeper hue. This may seem too preposterous for belief; yet what is Darkness but the negation of Light? It is true that Goethe has in one place named Darkness, in the abstract, a pure negation; but it is not less true that in the construction of his theory, Darkness plays the part of a positive; and necessarily so; for if we once conceive it as a simple negative, the theory falls to the ground. Light being assumed as colourless, no diminution of the colourless can give colours. Unless Darkness be positive,—co-operative,—we are left to seek the elements of colour *in* Light; and this is precisely where the Newtonian theory finds it.

It was an old idea that the different confines of shadow variously modify light, producing various colours. This Newton has elaborately refuted (*Optics*, part II. book i.), proving by simple experiments that all colours show themselves indiffer-

ently in the confines of shadow; and that when rays which differ in refrangibility are separated from one another, and any one is considered apart, "the colour of the light which it composes cannot be changed by any refraction or reflection whatever, as it ought to be were colours nothing else than modifications of light caused by refractions, reflections, and shadows."

It should be emphatically stated that the highest physical authorities have borne testimony to the accuracy of Goethe's facts; and as these facts are exceedingly numerous, and often highly important, the value of his optical studies must be estimated as considerable. He was a man of genius, and he laboured with the passionate patience of genius. But in awarding our admiration to the man, we may withhold assent from his theory. That which has exasperated men of science, and caused them to speak slightingly of his labours, is the bitterly polemical tone of contempt with which he announced a discovery which they could not recognise as true. He was aggressive and weak. He vociferated that Newton was in error; and a casual glance at his supposed detection of the error discovered a fundamental misconception. If we stand aloof from these heats of personal conflict, and regard the subject with a calmer eye, we shall see that the question simply reduces itself to this: which of the two theories offers the fullest and clearest explanation of the facts?

Light and Colours are, like Sound and Tones, to be viewed as objective phenomena, related to certain external conditions; or as subjective phenomena, related to certain sensations. Before asking What is Light or Sound? we must consider whether we seek the objective fact, or the subjective sensation. Every one admits that, apart from a sensitive organism the objective phenomena of Light and Sound exist, although *not* as the Light and Sound known in our sensations. But as we can only know them through our sensations, it seems eminently philosophical to begin our study with these. And this Goethe has done. He first unfolds the laws of physiological colours, *i.e.*, the modifications of the retina; and his immense services in this direction have been cordially recognised by Physiologists. Since, however, we can never learn thus what are the external *conditions* of the phenomena we have to seek in objective facts such an explanation as will best guide us. The assumption of rays having different degrees of refrangibility may one day turn out to be erroneous; but

is an assumption which colligates the facts better than any other hitherto propounded, and therefore it is accepted. By regarding both Sound and Light as produced from waves of an elastic medium, acoustic and optic phenomena are reducible to *calculation*. It is true they thus incur Goethe's reproach of ceasing to be concrete objects to the mind, and becoming mathematical symbols; but this is the very ambition of scientific research: a point to which I shall presently return. Let us compare the objective and subjective facts.

If an elastic rod be made to vibrate, the ear perceives nothing until the vibrations reach eight in a second, at which point the lowest tone becomes audible; if the rapidity of the vibrations be now constantly accelerated, tones higher and higher in the scale become audible, till the vibrations reach 24,000 in a second, at which point the ear again fails to detect any sound. In like manner, it is calculated that when vibrations reach 483 billions in a second, Light, or rather the red ray, begins to manifest itself to the retina; with increasing rapidity of vibration, the colours pass into orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet, till 727 billions are reached, at which point no *light* is perceptible. Here chemical action begins; and the rays are called chemical rays; as at the other end of the spectrum they are called heat rays. These are objective *conditions* which have been rigorously ascertained: and most important results have been arrived at through them.

The subjective facts according to Goethe lead to the belief that Tones are the product of Sound and Silence, as Colours are of Light and Darkness. Sound is made various (in tones) by various intermixtures with Silence. Descending from the highest audible note there is a gradual retardation of the vibrations, caused by the gradual encroachments of Silence, until at length Silence predominates and no Sound is heard. Suppose this hypothesis granted, we shall still have to ask what are the *conditions* of this Silence? If these are retardations of vibration, we may dispense with the hypothetical Silence. By similar reasoning we dispense with the hypothetical Darkness.

The assumption of different rays of unequal refrangibility is not only supported by the prismatic decomposition and recomposition of Light, but also finds confirmation in the law of Refraction discovered by Snellius. And the consequence drawn from it, namely, that the relation of the sine of incidence, though constant for each colour, *varies* in the different colours of the spectrum, brings the whole question within the

domain of mathematical calculation. The phenomena ceas to be *qualitative* only, and become *quantitative:* they ar measurable, and are measured. On Goethe's theory, grantin its truth, the phenomena are not measurable; and whoeve glances into a modern work on Optics will see that the pre cision and extent to which calculation has been carried, ar in themselves sufficient grounds for assigning the preference t the theory which admits such calculation. For as Copernicu profoundly says, "It is by no means necessary that hypothese should be true, nor even seem true; it is enough if they *recon cile calculation with observations.*"[1]

Goethe's want of acquaintance with Mathematics and wit the Methods of Physical Science prevented his understandin the defect in his own theory, and the manifest superiority c the theory which he attacked. He opposed every mathe matical treatment of the subject as mischievous; and Hege who has shown himself still more opposed to the Methods c Science, applauds him on this very point.

"I raised the whole school of Mathematicians against me," says Goethe, "and people were greatly amazed that one wh had no insight into Mathematics could venture to contradic Newton. *For that Physics could exist independently of Mathe matics no one seemed to have the slightest suspicion.*" Nor ha that suspicion gained yet any ground with men in the leas conversant with Physics, however necessary it may sometime have been to protest against too exclusive an employment o Mathematics. But the misconception which lies at the botton of Goethe's polemics was a very natural one to a poet neve trained in Mathematical or Experimental science, and unawar of the peculiar position occupied by Mathematics as the grea Instrument of research. In his essay, *Ueber Mathematik un deren Misbrauch*,[2] he compares the philosopher employing suc an instrument to a man who should invent a machine fo drawing a cork, an operation which two arms and hands ver easily effect.

To make his error intelligible, let us suppose a man c great intellectual acuteness and energy suddenly to light upo the idea that our chemical theories were vitiated by a fals basis—that the atomic theory was not only an hypothesis but an hypothesis which misrepresented the order of Nature there being, in truth, none of the quantitative relations as ar

[1] COPERNICUS: *De Revolutionibus Orbium Cœlestium*, 1566.
[2] *Werke*, xl. p. 468.

presupposed in that theory. Imagine the reformer setting to work, multiplying experiments, inventing explanations, disregarding all that the accumulated experience of ages had stored up on this very matter, and above all despising, as useless or worse, the very Instrument which rescues Chemistry from rough guess-work, and elevates it into the possibility of a science—the Instrument known as the Balance. It is probable that our reformer would make many curious observations, some of them quite new. It is probable that he would in many directions stimulate research. But it is certain that he would be hopelessly wrong in his theories, for he would necessarily be imperfect in his data. Without the delicate control of the Balance, chemical experiment can never become *quantitative;* and without quantitative knowledge there can be no chemical science strictly so called, but only *qualitative*, *i.e.* approximative knowledge. No amount of observation will render observation precise unless it can be measured. No force of intellect will supply the place of an Instrument. You may watch falling bodies for an eternity, but without Mathematics mere watching will yield no law of gravitation. You may mix acids and alkalis together with prodigality, but no amount of experiment will yield the secret of their composition, if you have flung away the Balance.

Goethe flung away the Balance. Hegel boldly says this is Goethe's merit—*das Prisma heruntergebracht zu haben.* He praises the "pure sense of Nature," which in the poet rebelled against Newton's "barbarism of Reflection." To the same effect Schelling, who does not hesitate to choose it as the very ground for proclaiming Goethe's superiority over the Newtonians, that "instead of the artificially confused and disfiguring experiments of the Newtonians, he places the purest, simplest verdicts of Nature herself before us;" he adds, "it is not surprising that the blind and slavish followers of Newton should oppose researches which prove that precisely the very section of Physics, in which up to this time they have imagined the most positive, nay, almost geometric evidence, to be on their side, is based on a fundamental error."[1]

This point of Method, if properly examined, will help to elucidate the whole question of Goethe's aptitude for dealing with physical science. The native direction of his mind is visible in his optical studies as decisively as in his poetry;

[1] SCHELLING: *Zeitschrift für spekulative Philos.* ii. p. 60.

that direction was towards the *concrete* phenomenon, not towards abstractions. He desired to explain the phenomena of colour, and in Mathematics these phenomena disappear; that is to say, the very *thing* to be studied is hurried out of sight and masked by abstractions. This was utterly repugnant to his mode of conceiving Nature. The marvellous phenomena of polarised light in the hands of Mathematicians excited his boundless scorn. "One knows not," he says, "whether a body or a mere ruin lies buried under those formulas."[1] The name of Biot threw him into a rage; and he was continually laughing at the Newtonians about their Prisms and Spectra, as if Newtonians were pedants who preferred their dusky rooms to the free breath of heaven. He always spoke of observations made in his garden, or with a simple prism in the sunlight, as if the natural and simple Method were much more certain than the artificial Method of Science. In this he betrayed his misapprehension of Method. He thought that Nature revealed herself to the patient observer—

> Und was sie deinem Geist nicht offenbaren mag,
> Das zwingst du ihr nicht ab mit Hebeln und mit Schrauben.

"And what she does not reveal to the Mind will not be extorted from her by Levers and Screws." Hence his failure, hence also his success; for we must not forget that if as a contribution to Optics his *Farbenlehre* be questionable, as a contribution to the knowledge of colour demanded by Artists it is very valuable. Painters have repeatedly acknowledged the advantage they have derived from it; and I remember hearing Riedel, at Rome, express the most unbounded enthusiasm for it; averring that, as a colourist, he had learned more from the *Farbenlehre*, than from all the other teachers and books he had ever known. To artists and physiologists —*i.e.* to those who are mainly concerned with the phenomena of colour as perceptions, and who demand qualitative rather than quantitative knowledge—his labours have a high value, and even physicists must admit that, however erroneous the theory and imperfect the method he has adopted, still the immense accumulation and systematisation of facts, and the ingenuity with which he explains them, deserve serious respect. As Bacon felicitously says, a tortoise on the right path will beat a racer on the wrong path; and if it be true that Goethe

[1] *Werke*, xl. 473.

was on the wrong path, it is not less true that he shows the thews and sinews of a racer.

It is with other feelings that we contemplate him labouring in the organic sciences. There the native tendencies of his mind and the acquired tendencies of education better fitted him for success. Biology has peculiar fascinations for the poetical mind, and has seduced several poets to become physiologists. Mathematics are not required. Concrete observations furnish the materials for a keen and comprehensive comparison.

Let it be distinctly understood, and that not on the testimony of the admiring biographer, but on some of the highest scientific testimonies in Europe,[1] that in the organic sciences Goethe holds an eminent place—eminent not because of his rank as a poet, but in spite of it. Let it be understood that in these sciences he is not to be treated as a poet, a facile amateur, but as a *thinker* who, having mastered sufficient knowledge to render his path secure, gave an impulse to the minds of contemporaries and successors, which is not even yet arrested.

Goethe was a thinker in science, a manipulator of scientific ideas. He was not one of those laborious and meritorious workers who with microscope and scalpel painfully collect the materials from which Science emerges. He worked, too, in his way, and everywhere sought in the order of Nature for verification of the ideas which he had conceived *a priori*. Do not however mistake him for a metaphysician. He was a positive thinker on the *a priori* Method; a Method vicious only when the seeker rests contented with his own assumptions, or seeks only a *partial* hasty confrontation with facts—what Bacon calls *notiones temere a rebus abstractas;* a Method eminently philosophic when it merely *goes before* the facts, anticipating what will be the tardy conclusions of experience. The *a priori* Method is a bright and brilliant instrument. It will cut the fingers when clumsily handled. It will cut deep into the truth if rightly used; as it was by Kepler and Goethe,

[1] In the first edition of this work several passages were quoted in support of the assertion in the text; but one effect of this chapter has been to render such evidence superfluous, Goethe's position in science becoming daily more widely recognised. The following references are therefore all that need now be given:—AUGUSTE ST. HILAIRE: *Morphologie Végétale*, i. p. 15. OSCAR SCHMIDT: *Goethe's Verhältniss zu den organischen Wissenschaften*, p. 10. JOHANNES MUELLER: *Ueber phantastische Gesichtserscheinungen*, p. 104. CUVIER: *Histoire des Sciences Naturelles*, iv. p. 316. ISIDORE, GEOFFROY ST. HILAIRE: *Essais de Zoologie générale*, p. 139. OWEN: *Archetype and Homologies of the Skeleton*, p. 3. HELMHOLTZ: *Allgemeine Monatsschrift*, May 1853. VIRCHOW: *Goethe als Naturforscher.*

who looked upon nature from the heights, but having seen c fancied they saw something in the plains, at once descende to verify the truth of their observation.

We will glance at his achievements in this field, The in termaxillary bone[1] was long a bone of contention amon anatomists. Vesalius—one of the grandest and boldest the early pioneers who wrote against Galen, as the philo sophers wrote against Aristotle—declared, and with justice that Galen's anatomy was not founded on the dissection o the *human* body, but on that of animals. A proof, said h is that "Galen indicates a separate bone connected with th maxillary by sutures; a bone which, as every anatomist ca satisfy himself, exists only in animals." The Galenists wer in arms. They could bring no fact in evidence, but *tha* was of very little consequence; if facts were deficient, wa not hypothesis always ready? Sylvius, for example, boldl said that man *had formerly* an intermaxillary bone. If he ha it no longer, he *ought* to have it. It is luxury, it is sensualit which has gradually deprived man of this bone.[2] What has no luxury been made to answer for! The dispute was carrie down through centuries, no one attempting to demonstrat anatomically the existence of the bone. Camper actuall raised this presumed absence of the bone into the one dis tinguishing mark separating man from the ape; which i doubly unfortunate, for in the first place the bone is no absent in man, and secondly, in as far as it can be considere absent in man it is equally absent in the chimpanzee, th highest of the apes.[3] Thus was anatomy a treacherous ally i this question, although Camper knew not how treacherous.

This slight historical sketch will serve to show that th discovery, if unimportant, was at least far from easy; indee so little did it lie in the track of general knowledge, that it wa at first received with contemptuous disbelief, even by men s eminent as Blumenbach,[4] and it was forty years gaining gener

[1] It is the centre bone of the upper jaw—that which contains the incisor teet

[2] This same Sylvius it was who replied to Vesalius that Galen was n wrong when he described man as having seven bones in his sternum (the are only three): "for," said he, "in ancient times the robust chests heroes might very well have had more bones than our degenerate day c boast." It is impossible to decide upon what might have been; but t mummies are ancient enough, and they have no more bones than we.

[3] Blumenbach had already noted that in some young apes and baboo no trace was discoverable of the bone.

[4] See his *Comparative Anatomy*, translated by Lawrence; and the tran lator's note, p. 60.

acceptance, although Loder, Spix, and Sömmering at once recognised it. Camper, to whom Goethe sent the manuscript, found that it was *très élégant, admirablement bien écrit, c'est à dire d'une main admirable*, but thought a better Latin style desirable. Goethe began to despise the pedantry of professional men who would deny the testimony of their five senses in favour of an old doctrine; and he admirably says, "the phrases men are accustomed to repeat incessantly end by becoming convictions, *and ossify the organs of intelligence.*"[1]

The most remarkable point in this discovery is less the discovery than the Method which led to it. The intermaxillary bone in animals contains the incisor teeth. Man has incisor teeth; and Goethe, fully impressed with the conviction that there was Unity in Nature, boldly said, if man has the teeth in common with animals, he must have the bone in common with animals. Anatomists, lost in details, and wanting that fundamental conception which now underlies all philosophical anatomy, saw no abstract necessity for such identity of composition; the more so, because *evidence* seemed wholly against it. But Goethe was not only guided by the true philosophic conception, he was also instinctively led to the true Method of demonstration, namely, Comparison of the various modifications which this bone underwent in the animal series. This Method has now become *the* Method; and we require to throw ourselves into the historical position to appreciate its novelty, at the time he employed it. He found on comparison that the bone varied with the nutrition of the animal, and the size of the teeth. He found, moreover, that in some animals the bone was not separated from the jaw; and that in children the sutures were traceable. He admitted that seen from the front no trace of the sutures was visible, but on the interior there were unmistakable traces. Examination of the fœtal skull has since set the point beyond dispute. I have

[1] Since the first edition of this work was published, I have come upon a piquant illustration of the not very honourable tendency in men to plume themselves on the knowledge of a discovery which they had formerly rejected. VICQ D'AZYR: *Discours sur l'Anatomie* (*Œuvres*, iv. 159), mentioning his discovery of the intermaxillary, adds, "J'ai appris de M. Camper, dans son dernier voyage à Paris, *que cet os lui est connu depuis très long temps.*" Now this same Camper, on receiving the anonymous dissertation in which Goethe propounded the discovery, said, "Je dois ré-examiner tout cela"; but on learning that Goethe was the author, he wrote to Merck that he had "convinced himself that the bone did not exist" (see VIRCHOW: *Goethe als Naturforscher*, p. 79); yet no sooner does a great anatomist tell him that the bone exists, than he complacently declares "I have known it a long while."

seen one where the bone was distinctly separated; and possess a skull, the ossification of which is far advanced the parietal sutures, yet internally faint traces of the inte maxillary are visible.[1]

Goethe made his discovery in 1784, and communicated it several anatomists. Loder mentions it in his *Compendium* 1787.

Respecting Goethe's claim to the honour of this discovery, have recently discovered a fact which is of great or sma significance according to the views we hold respecting suc claims; namely, whether the clear enunciation of an ide though never carried out in detail, suffices to give priority; whether, in the words of Owen,[2] "He becomes the true di coverer who establishes the truth: and the sign of the pro is the general acceptance. Whoever, therefore, resumes th investigation of a neglected or repudiated doctrine, elicits i true demonstration, and discovers and explains the nature the errors which have led to its tacit or declared rejectio may calmly and confidently await the acknowledgments of h rights in its discovery." If we hold the former view, we mu assign the discovery of the intermaxillary in man to Vic d'Azyr; if we hold the latter, to Goethe. In the *Traité d'An tomie et de Physiologie*, which the brilliant anatomist publishe in 1786, we not only find him insisting on the then novel ide of an uniform plan in the structure of organic beings, accor ing to which Nature "semble opérer toujours d'après un modè primitif et général dont elle ne s'écarte qu'à regret et dont rencontre partout des traces;"[3] but we find this explicit illustr tion given among others: "Peut on s'y refuser enfin (*i.e.* admit the traces of a general plan) en comparant les os max laires antérieurs que j'appelle *incisifs* dans les quadrupède avec cette pièce osseuse qui soutient les dents incisiv supérieurs dans l'homme, où elle est séparée de l'os maxillai par une petite fêlure très remarquable dans les fœtus, à pei visible dans les adultes, et dont personne n'avoit con l'usage." In a subsequent passage of the second *Discou*

[1] These might be considered abnormal cases. But M. J. Weber has devis a method of treating the skull with dilute nitric acid, which makes the sepa tion of the bones perfect. *Froriep's Notizen*, 1828, bd. 19, 282. VIRCHO *l.c.* p. 80.

[2] OWEN: *Homologies of the Skeleton*, p. 76. Comp. also MALPIGHI: *Op Posthuma*, 1697, p. 5.

[3] VICQ D'AZYR: *Œuvres*, iv. p. 26. The work is there called *Discours l'Anatomie*.

he say: "Toutes ces dents sont soutenues dans la mâchoire antérieure par un os que j'ai décrit sous le nom d'incisif ou labial, que quelques-uns appellent intermaxillaire, que l'on à découvert depuis peu dans les morses, et *dont j'ai reconnu les traces dans les os maxillaires supérieurs du fœtus humain.*"[1]

The reader will remark that this is not simply the announcement of the fact, but is adduced in illustration of the very same doctrine which Goethe invoked. The *Traité d'Anatomie*, as we have seen, was published in 1786; that is to say, two years after Goethe had made his discovery; and Sömmering, in writing to Merck,[2] says: "I have expressed my opinion on Vicq d'Azyr's work in the *Götting. Gelehrt. Anzeig.* It is the best we have. But as far as the work has yet gone Goethe is not mentioned in it." From which it may be inferred that Sömmering supposed Vicq d'Azyr to have been acquainted with Goethe's contemporary labours; but against such a supposition we must remember that, if Germany took note of what was passing in France, discoveries made in Germany travelled with great slowness across the Rhine; and in illustration of this slowness we may note that Geoffroy St. Hilaire, who was several years afterwards nobly working out conceptions of Philosophical Anatomy in a spirit so identical with that of Goethe, was utterly unconscious of the existence of a predecessor, and noticing the monograph of G. Fischer, said, "*Gœthes* aurait le premier découvert l'interpariétal dans quelques rongeurs, et se serait contenté d'en faire mention par une note manuscrite sur un exemplaire d'un traité d'anatomie comparée."[3]

But the conclusive point is this: although the *Traité d'Anatomie* did not appear till 1786, the discovery of the intermaxillary was published by Vicq d'Azyr in the Académie des Sciences for 1779,[4] five years before Goethe announced his discovery to Herder. The question of priority is therefore settled. The Frenchman had no need of any acquaintance with what the German poet had worked out; and Merck's astonishment at finding Goethe's "so-called discovery accepted

[1] VICQ D'AZYR: *Œuvres*, iv. p. 159. [2] *Briefe an Merck*, p. 493.
[3] *Philosophie Anatomique*, ii. p. 55. Geoffroy was afterwards very proud to have the suffrage of *Gœthes;* and Geoffroy's son has spoken most honourably of the coincidence between the speculations of his father and the poet.
[4] In the first edition I stated that "from a note to BLUMENBACH'S *Comparative Anatomy* (p. 19), it seems as if Vicq d'Azyr had made this observation as early as 1780." The date in the text is given by Vicq d'Azyr himself, *Œuvres*, iv. 159.

by Vicq d'Azyr" was wholly misplaced; but can we be equall sure that Goethe was altogether ignorant of his predecessor I think he was. The sudden enthusiasm, the laborious investigation, the jubilate of triumph, are evidences that ever his predecessor's discovery had come under his notic (which is highly improbable) it was completely forgotten; an we may judge how completely Vicq d'Azyr's announcemen had been without echo in the scientific world, from the fac that the three most illustrious men of the day, Campe Blumenbach, and Sömmering, knew nothing of it, and denie the existence of the bone Goethe claimed to have discovered Thus, in assigning priority to Vicq d'Azyr, we by no mean diminish Goethe's merit. He it was who thoroughly worke out the discovery; he it was who gave it a fixed and definit place in science; he it is who is always named as the dis coverer.

The only importance of this discovery is the philosophi Method which it illustrates; the firm belief it implies that a organisms are constructed on an uniform plan, and that Com parative Anatomy is only valid because such a plan is trac able. In our day it seems an easy conception. We ar so accustomed to consider all the variations in organi structures as modifications of a type, that we can hardl realise to ourselves any other conception. That it was b no means an obvious idea, nor one easy to apply, may be see in two brilliant applications—the metamorphosis of plants, an the vertebral theory of the skull.

Place a flower in the hands of the cleverest man of you acquaintance, providing always he has not read modern work of science, and assure him that leaf, calyx, corolla, bud, pisti and stamen, differing as they do in colour and in form, ar nevertheless all modified leaves; assure him that flower an fruit are but modifications of one typical form, which is th leaf; and if he has any confidence in your knowledge he ma accept the statement, but assuredly it will seem to him a mo incomprehensible paradox. Place him before a human skeleto and, calling his attention to its manifold forms, assure him th every bone is either a vertebra, or the appendage to a vertebr and that the skull is a congeries of vertebræ under variou modifications; he will, as before, accept your statement, pe haps; but he will, as before, think it one of the refinements transcendental speculation to be arrived at only by phil sophers. Yet both of these astounding propositions are fir

principles in Morphology; and in the History of Science both of these propositions are to be traced to Goethe. Botanists and anatomists have, of course, greatly modified the views he promulgated, and have substituted views nearer and nearer the truth, without yet being quite at one. But he gave the impulse to their efforts.

While botanists and anatomists were occupied in analysis, striving to distinguish separate parts, and give them distinct names, his poetical and philosophic mind urged him to seek the supreme synthesis, and reduce all diversities to a higher unity. In his poem addressed to Christiane he says:

> Thou, my love, art perplexed with the endless seeming confusion
> Of the luxuriant wealth which in the garden is spread;
> Name upon name thou hearest, and in thy dissatisfied hearing,
> With a barbarian noise one drives another along.
> All the forms resemble, yet none is the same as another;
> Thus the whole of the throng points at a deep-hidden law.[1]

To prove this identity was no easy task. He imagined an ideal typical plant (*Urpflanze*), of which all actual plants were the manifold realisations; and this I cannot but agree with Schleiden in considering a conception at once misleading and infelicitous. He was happier in the conception of all the various organs of the plant as modifications of one fundamental type; this type he names the *Leaf*. Not that we are to understand the metamorphosis of plants to be analogous to the metamorphosis of animals (an error into which I fell in my first edition, as Ferdinand Cohn properly points out), nor indeed is it such a metamorphosis at all. The pistil and petal are not first developed into leaves, and from these leaves changed into petal and pistil; as a caterpillar develops into a grub, and the grub into a butterfly. This would be metamorphosis. Instead of this we must conceive the whole plant as a succession of repetitions of the original type variously modified; in some of these repetitions the modification has been slight, in others considerable. The two typical forms are stem and leaf. From the seed there is an ascending and a descending axis, formed of a succession of stems: the ascending axis is called the aerial stem; the descending axis is the root. From both of these stems lateral stems or branches are given off; and from these again others. The Leaf is the second type: it forms all the other organs by various modifications. Widely as a pistil differs from a petal,

[1] Whewell's translation: *Hist. Inductive Sciences*, iii. 360.

and both from an ordinary leaf, they are disclosed as identic by the history of their development.

It is impossible to be even superficially acquainted wi biological speculations, and not to recognise the immen importance of the recognition of a Type. As Helmholtz tru observes: "The labours of botanists and zoologists did litt more than collect materials, until they learned to dispose the in such a series that the laws of dependence and a generalise type could be elicited. Here the great mind of our poet foun a field suited to it; and the time was favourable. Enoug material had been collected in botany and comparati anatomy for a clear survey to be taken; and although h contemporaries all wandered without a compass, or co tented themselves with a dry registration of facts, he w able to introduce into science two leading ideas of infini fruitfulness."

And here the question presents itself: Is Goethe rightful entitled to the honour universally awarded to him of havi founded the Morphology of Plants? We must again evol the distinction previously stated (p. 356). No one denies th the doctrine was so entirely novel that botanists at first r jected it with contempt, and only consented to accept it whe some eminent botanists had shown it to be true. No or denies that Goethe worked it out; if any predecessor ha conceived the idea, no one had carried the idea into its man fold applications. But he has himself named Linnæus an Wolff as his precursors; and it is of some interest to ascerta in what degree these precursors have claim to the honour the discovery.

It has been remarked by the eminent botanist Ferdinan Cohn,[1] that the great Linnæus mingled with his observatio much fantastic error, which the poet Goethe was the first t eliminate. But Dr. Hooker, while admitting the metaphysic and speculative matter which Linnæus has mixed up with h statements, is disposed to value them highly. "The funda mental passage is in the *Systema Naturæ*, in the introduction t which work the following passage occurs: 'Prolepsis (Anticip tion) exhibits the mystery of the metamorphosis of plants, b which the herb, which is the *larva* or imperfect condition, changed into the declared fructification: for the plant capable of producing either a leafy herb or a fructificatio

[1] *Goethe und die Metamorphosen der Pflanzen*, in the *Deutsches Museum* PRUTZ, iv. Jan. 1862.

. . . When a tree produces a flower, nature anticipates the produce of five years where these come out all at once; forming of the bud leaves of the next year, *bracts;* of those of the following year, the *calyx;* of the following, the *corolla;* of the next, the *stamina;* of the subsequent, the *pistils*, filled with the granulated marrow of the seed, the terminus of the life of a vegetable.' . . . In the *Prolepsis* the speculative matter, which Linnæus himself carefully distinguishes as such, must be separated from the rest, and this may, I think, be done in most of the sections. He starts with explaining clearly and well the origin and position of buds, and their constant presence, whether developed or not, in the axils of the leaf: adding abundance of acute observations and experiments to prove his statements. The leaf he declares to be the first effort of the plant in spring: he proceeds to show, successively, that bracts, calyx, corolla, stamen, and pistils are each of them metamorphosed leaves."[1] Dr. Hooker adds, "There is nothing in all this that detracts from the merits of Goethe's re-discovery;" and there can be little doubt that, had not Goethe, or another, proved the doctrine, botanists would to this day have continued to pass over the passage in Linnæus as one of his "fanciful flights."

The *aperçu* was in Linnæus; a spark awaiting the presence of some inflammable imagination; and when we remember how fond Goethe was of Linnæus, we can hardly suppose that this *aperçu* had not more than once flashed across his mind as a gleam of the truth. With regard to Caspar Friedrich Wolff the evidence is far from satisfactory. It is certain that Wolff in his immortal work on "Generation" had clearly grasped the morphological principles, and had left Goethe very little to add to them. But it is very uncertain whether Goethe had ever read Wolff. Some years after the publication of his work he mentions with pride the fact of Wolff having been his "admirable precursor," and says that his attention to the work had been drawn by a namesake of the great embryologist. It was with no little surprise therefore that I read in Düntzer,[2] the unhesitating assertion that in 1785 Herder had made Goethe a present of Wolff's *Theoria Generationis*, which contained a rough outline of several of Goethe's favourite ideas. If this statement were correct, Goethe would be under serious suspicion; but it is not correct. On referring to the passage

[1] WHEWELL: *Hist. of Ind. Sciences*, 3rd ed., iii. 553.
[2] *Goethe und Karl August*, 1861, p. 212.

in Herder's letter to Knebel, which Düntzer pretends is the authority for this statement, I find, in the first place, that Herder does not specify the *Theoria Generationis*, nor indeed can we be sure he refers to C. F. Wolff at all; he merely says "Wolf," which is a common name among German authors; in the second place he does not say that he has *given* the book to Goethe, but that he *intends* doing so when he can get a copy; meanwhile Knebel is not to mention the book to Goethe. And out of such a sentence as this, Düntzer has constructed a "fact," which while it gives his pedantry the small delight of correcting in a foot note Goethe's assertion that F. A. Wolf directed his attention to the *Theoria Generationis*, lays Goethe open to the charges of having borrowed his morphology from Wolff, of having concealed the fact, and of having pretended never to have seen his predecessor's work until his attention was directed to it some years afterwards. Against such charges the following arguments may be urged. First, there is Goethe's own explicit statement—and his veracity is not lightly to be questioned. Secondly, if the work referred to by Herder was the *Theoria Generationis* (which is probable, but not certain) and if it was given as intended (also probable but not certain) we have no evidence that Goethe read it. Thirdly, and conclusively, the date of the very letter in which Herder mentions his intention is ten years *later* (1795) than Düntzer would have us suppose; and is thus five years *after* the publication of Goethe's views (1790).[1]

The *Metamorphosen* was published in 1790. In 1817 Goethe says that he had requested his scientific friends to make notes of any passages they might meet in earlier writers relative to the topic he had treated, because he was convinced that there was nothing absolutely new. His friend F. A. Wolff directed him to Caspar Friedrich. In expressing his admiration for his great predecessor he is proud to acknowledge how much he had learned from him during five-and-twenty years. Now five-and-twenty years from 1817 brings us back to 1792—that is to say, two years after the publication of the *Metamorphosen* and three years before the letter written by Herder.[2] So that

[1] See KNEBEL: *Nachlass*, ii. 268, which is the authority cited by Düntzer whose inaccuracy is unpardonable in one so uniformly dull, and so merciless in ferreting out the small inaccuracies of others.

[2] It should be added that Knebel's editors place a (?.) after the date 1795. But we have no reason to suppose they could err by *ten* years in assigning the letter its place; Düntzer professes no doubt as to the accuracy of the date; and internal evidence, taken with what is said above, renders it highly probable that 1795 is very little removed from the correct date.

if we assume the work in question to have been the *Theoria Generationis*, Goethe was perfectly correct in mentioning A. F. Wolff, and not Herder, as the friend to whom he was first indebted for a knowledge of its existence.

The tone in which Goethe speaks of Caspar Friedrich Wolff is assuredly not that of a man who had any obligations to conceal; but of a man who recognising a precursor with pleasure, speaks of the two theories as two independent modes of conceiving the phenomena, the theory of his precursor being pre-eminently physiological, while his own was pre-eminently morphological.

With regard both to Linnæus and Wolff it may be said that they anticipated the morphology of plants, but that to Goethe belongs the credit of establishing it. We do not take from the credit of Columbus by showing that five centuries before he discovered the New World, Scandinavian voyagers had repeatedly touched on those shores; nor do we diminish the value of Goethe's contribution to Science, by showing that before him Wolff had perceived the identity of the various organs of the plant. It was not the purpose of the Scandinavians to discover the New World. They did not make their discovery a possession for mankind. Neither was it Wolff's purpose to create a new theory in Botany. He discovered a process of Nature while he was seeking the laws of Epigenesis, and he only used his discovery as one of several illustrations. Columbus set out with the distinct purpose of discovery, and made his discovery a possession for all time. So also Goethe set out with the distinct purpose, and Botanists justly declare that to his work they owe the idea of plant metamorphosis.

Goethe's work is very beautiful, and may be read without any previous botanical knowledge. It traces the metamorphoses of the grain into the leaf, and thence into the flower. The morphological part is perfect, except that, as Cohn remarks, he has given an exclusive predominance to the leaf, and overlooked the not less important stem. It is to be regretted that he hampers himself with the following physiological hypothesis: every segment proceeding immediately from that which goes before it, receiving its nourishment through all the segments which have gone before, must, he says, be more perfect, and must send to its leaves and buds a more elaborated sap. The result is that the coarser fluids are rejected, the finer attracted, and the plant grows more and more perfect till it reaches its point of culmination.

This hypothesis of a more elaborated sap, reaching the ultimate segments, is in direct contradiction to the hypothesis of Wolff, which also declares the flower to be modified leaves; but how modified?[1] they are modified because they are imperfect. Their development has been arrested. They are smaller, have less sap, the sap has lost its chlorophyl, and the colour of the flower is an evidence of *imperfection*. I cannot stop to consider Wolff's ingenious arguments by which he endeavours to show that flowering and fructification are arrests of development. It is enough to indicate the contrast between his and Goethe's views. Both are agreed that inasmuch as a differentiation does take place, it must have some cause; but the cause is by Wolff said to be deficiency of sap, by Goethe elaborated sap.

Goethe agrees with Wolff as regards the passage of the leaf into the flower being dependent on the acceleration or retardation of the sap. It had been noticed by Linnæus that a too abundant supply of food retards the flowering, and accelerates the growth of leaves; whereas a moderate supply, nay, even an approach to starvation, accelerates the flowering and diminishes the number of leaves. Wolff attributes this simply to the fact that so long as there is abundant nutriment there will be abundant growth, and no arrest in the shape of imperfect leaves (*i.e.* flowers); and when nutriment is scanty, the arrest soon takes place. But unfortunately for this opinion, and indeed for the opinion that flowers are imperfect leaves resulting from a want of nutriment, there is a class of plants which blossom *before* they put forth leaves. Goethe's explanation hypothetical though it be, is better. He says that as long as there are any of the grosser fluids to be rejected, the organs of the plant are forced to employ themselves in this labour, which labour renders flowering impossible; but no sooner do we limit the nourishment than, by diminishing this process of elaboration, we accelerate the flowering.

We are here touching on the great law of antagonism between Growth and Development which is intimately connected with the law of Reproduction—a subject too vast to be even indicated in this rapid survey. The student will note, however, that although Goethe perils his position by the introduction of an hypothetical elaboration of fluids, without assigning a cause for that elaboration, he nevertheless sees, what many

[1] *Theorie von der Generation*, § 80, *sq.*

fail to see, that Reproduction is only another form of Growth —a process of differentiation. "The vital forces of the plant," he says, "manifest themselves in two ways: on the one hand *vegetation*, issuing in the stem and leaves; and on the other *reproduction*, issuing in flowers and fruits. If we examine vegetation closely, we shall see that the plant continuing itself from articulation to articulation, from leaf to leaf, and putting forth buds, accomplishes a *reproduction* which differs from that ordinarily so-named in being *successive*—it manifests itself in a series of isolated developments instead of manifesting itself *simultaneously*. That force which produces buds has the greatest analogy with that which determines simultaneously the higher act of propagation. We can force the plant to produce buds incessantly, or we can accelerate the epoch of flowering; the first by abundant nourishment, the second by nourishment less abundant. In defining *budding* as 'successive propagation,' and *flowering* and *fructification* as 'simultaneous propagation,' we designate the mode in which each manifests itself. Thus, then, whether the plant buds, flowers, or fructifies, it is always by means of *the same organs*, the form and destination of which are changed. The same organ which expands into a leaf upon the stem and presents such varied forms, contracts to make the calyx, expands again to make the petal, to contract once more into the sexual organs, and expand for the last time into fruit."

Whatever may be the final decision upon the Metamorphoses of Plants, there must ever remain the great and unique glory of a poet having created a new branch of science, and by means as legitimately scientific as those of any other creation. Morphology now counts among its students illustrious names, and crowds of workers. And this science we owe to the author of *Faust*. Nor is this all. He has priority in some of the most luminous and comprehensive ideas which are now guiding philosophic speculation on the science of life. In the historical sketch which Carus prefixes to his *Transcendental Anatomy*, after setting forth the various tentatives men had made to discover by means of *descriptive* anatomy, and occasional comparisons, the true relations of the various parts of the body, he says:[1] "If we go back as far as possible into the history of the labours undertaken with a view to arrive at the philosophic conception of the skeleton, we find that the first

[1] *Anatomie Comparée*, vol. iii. p. 3. French trans.

idea of a metamorphosis of the osseous forms,—*i.e.* that all forms are but modifications more or less traceable of one and the same Type—belongs to Goethe." After a quotation of Goethe's words, Carus adds: "It is difficult to express in clearer terms the idea of the Unity which rules over the plurality of the skeleton-forms. Its first great application was the vertebral theory of the skull."

Let me repeat, as a matter of justice, and not to allow the high praise bestowed on Goethe's efforts to mislead the reader's expectation, that the merit is that of a *thinker in science*, not the merit of an industrious discoverer and collector of details. His great effort was to create a Method, to establish principles upon which the science could be founded. In an admirable little essay on "Experiment as the mediator between the Object and the Subject," written in 1793, we see how clear were his ideas on Method. "Man," he says, "regards at first all external objects with reference to himself; and rightly so, for his whole fate depends on them, on the pleasure or pain which they cause him, on their utility or danger to him." This is the initial stage of all speculation. Its Method is the determination of the external order according to *analogies drawn from within.* The culmination of this Method is seen in the fundamental axiom of Des Cartes and Spinoza: *all clear ideas are true.* So long as this Method is followed, Metaphysics reigns triumphant, and Science is impossible. It is displaced by the Objective Method. Goethe remarks how much more difficult is the task of discerning objects according to this Method, *i.e.* not as related to *us*, but as related to one another. Our touchstone of pleasure or pain is given up. With godlike indifference we become *spectators*, and seek that which *is*, not that which touches *us*. Thus the real botanist considers less the beauty, or the use of flowers, than their laws of growth, and their relation to each other. And as the sun shines on them, developing them all impartially, so must the philosopher look on them with calm contemplative eye, taking the terms of his comparison from the circle he contemplates, not from any figments of his own mind. Goethe sets aside all inquiry into final causes,—by Bacon justly styled "barren virgins,"—and seeks to know what *is*.

It is worthy of remark that the study of Development is quite a modern study. Formerly men were content with the full-statured animal,—the perfected art,—the completed society. The phases of development and the laws of growth

were disregarded, or touched on in a vague uncertain manner. A change has come over the spirit of inquiry. "The history of Development," says Von Baer, "is the true torchbearer in every inquiry into organic bodies." In Geology, in Physiology, in History, and in Art, we are now all bent on tracing the phases of development. To understand the *grown* we try to follow the *growth*.

As a thinker in science Goethe was truly remarkable, and as a worker not contemptible. To prove how far he was in advance of his age we have only to cite a single passage which, in its aphoristic pregnant style, contains the clear announcement of biological laws, which have since been named among the glories of Geoffroy St. Hilaire, Von Baer, Milne-Edwards, Cuvier, and Lamarck.

"Every living being is not a unity but a plurality. Even when it appears as an individual, it is the reunion of beings living and existing in themselves, identical in origin, but which may appear identical or similar, different or dissimilar.

"The *more imperfect* a being is the more do its individual parts *resemble each other*, and the more do these parts *resemble the whole*. The *more perfect* the being is the more *dissimilar are its parts*. In the former case the parts are more or less a repetition of the whole; in the latter case they are totally unlike the whole.

"The more the parts resemble each other, the less subordination is there of one to the other. *Subordination of parts indicates high grade of organisation.*"[1]

To illustrate by familiar examples. Take a polyp and cut it into several pieces; each piece will live and manifest all those phenomena of nutrition and sensibility which the whole polyp manifested. Turn it inside out like a glove, the internal part becomes its skin, the external part becomes its stomach. The reason is, that in the simple structure of the polyp, the parts resemble each other and resemble the whole. There is no individual organ, or apparatus of organs, performing one function, such as nutrition, and nothing else. Every function is performed by every part; just as in savage societies, every man is his own tailor, his own armourer, his own cook, and his own policeman. But take an animal higher in the scale, and there you find the structure composed of dissimilar parts, and each part having a different office. That animal cannot

[1] *Zur Morphologie*, 1807 (written in 1795), *Werke*, xxxvi. p. 7.

be hewn in pieces and each piece continue to live as before. That animal cannot have its skin suddenly turned into a stomach. That animal, in the social body, cannot make his own clothes or his own musket; the division of labour which has accompanied his higher condition has robbed him of his universal dexterity.

The law invoked by Goethe, is now to be met with in every philosophic work on zoology. One form of it is known in England as Von Baer's law, viz. that Development proceeds from the Like to the Unlike, from the General to the Particular, from the Homogeneous to the Heterogeneous. I have too profound an admiration for Von Baer to wish in any way to diminish his splendid claims, but I cannot help remarking that when writers attribute to him the merit of having discovered this law, they are in direct contradiction with Von Baer himself, who not only makes no such claim, but in giving the formula adds, "this law of development has indeed never been overlooked."[1] His merit is the splendid application and demonstration of the law, not the first perception of it.

It is generally known that the law of "division of labour in the animal organism" is claimed by Milne-Edwards, the great French zoologist, as a discovery of his own. Yet we see how clearly it is expressed in Goethe's formula. And with even more clearness do we see expressed Cuvier's principle of classification, viz. the *subordination of parts*. I do not wish to press this point further, nor do I wish that these great men should be robbed of any merit in order to glorify Goethe with their trophies. The student of history knows how discoveries are, properly speaking, made by the Age, and not by men. He knows that all discoveries have had their anticipations; and that the world justly credits the man who makes the discovery *available*, not the man who simply perceived that it was possible. I am not here writing the history of science, but the biography of Goethe; and the purpose of these citations is to show that he placed himself at the highest point of view possible to his age, and that as a thinker he thought

[1] "Dieses Gesetz der Ausbildung ist wohl nie verkannt worden." *Zur Entwickelungsgeschichte.* Erster Theil, p. 153. Among others, WOLFF has clearly stated it. *Theorie von der Generation*, § 28, p. 163. See also MECKEL, *Traité d'Anatomie Comparée.* French trans., i. 297. BUFFON also says: "Un corps organisé dont toutes les parties seraient semblables à lui-même est la plus simple car ce n'est que la répétition de la même forme." *Hist. Nat.*, 1749, ii. 47.

he thoughts which the greatest men have subsequently made popular.

Observe, moreover, that Goethe's anticipation is not of hat slight and fallacious order which, like so many other nticipations, rests upon a vague or incidental phrase. He lid not simply attain an *aperçu* of the truth. He mastered he law, and his mastery of that law sprang from his mastery of the whole series of conceptions in which it finds its place. Thus in his "Introduction to Comparative Anatomy," written n 1795, he pointed out the essentially sterile nature of the comparisons then made, not only in respect of comparing nimals with men and with each other, not only in the abuse of final causes, but also in taking man as the standard, instead of commencing with the simplest organisms and rising gradu-lly upwards. One year after this, Geoffroy St. Hilaire, gnorant of what was passing in the study at Weimar, and in he Museum at Jena, published his *Dissertation sur les Makis*, wherein he began his renovation of the science. He, too, like Goethe, was bent on the creation of a Type according to which all organised structures could be explained. This con-eption of a Type (*allgemeines Bild*), according to which the whole animal kingdom may be said to be constructed, was truly scientific conception, and has borne noble fruit. It nust not, however, be confounded with a Platonic Idea. It vas no metaphysical entity, it was simply a scientific artifice. Goethe expressly says that we are not for an instant to believe n the *existence* of this Type as an objective reality, although it s the generalised expression of that which really exists. This aution has not been sufficiently present to the minds of everal speculators; and the idea of a Type has engendered ot a few extravagances. Nevertheless, the net result of these peculations has been good.

One of the most interesting applications of the idea of a Type is the theory of the vertebral structure of the skull. Every cultivated reader knows that transcendental anatomists ow conceive the skull as composed of three, or more, verte-ræ variously modified; but very few readers have a distinct onception of what parts of the skull are separable into verte-ræ, or what is the amount of resemblance now traceable nderneath the modifications; and this is the less to be ondered at, seeing that even now there is no great unanimity mong independent investigators. The principles of Morpho-gy are not always sufficiently attended to. Just as in con-

sidering the Metamorphoses of Plants we had to dismiss th idea of the pistil or stamen having been modified from a lea so must we dismiss the idea of a skull having been modifie from a vertebral column. In both cases we may express th morphological identity—the unity of composition—by co sidering every organ in the plant as a modification of th typical leaf, and every bone in the skeleton as a modificatio of the typical vertebra (or part of a vertebra); but it is inaccurate and misleading to call the skull a vertebral colum as it would be to call the brain a spinal cord. Between th brain and cord there is a fundamental identity: both a masses of ganglionic substance, having (as I have elsewhe shown)[1] identical properties and similar, though not the sam functions. But over and above these fundamental resem blances there are manifest and important differences. T disregard these differences, and fix attention solely on th resemblances, is eminently unphilosophical; and we can onl be justified in saying that the structure of the skull is on th same *general plan* as the structure of the rest of the spina axis, precisely as we say that the structure of the fish exhibit the same general plan as the structure of the quadruped. I other words, every special vertebra is the *individual* form of *general* type. The skull is not, as Oken maintains, a modifie spinal column.[2] To maintain this is to say that the spina vertebra is the typical form from which the cranial vertebr are developed; whereas, in truth, both are but variations o one typical form; and the idea of Kielmeyer that the spina column is a skull, is quite as accurate as the idea of Oken tha the skull is a spinal column. Indeed, Kielmeyer's idea is th more admissible of the two; for if we seek our evidence i embryology, or in that "permanent embryology" the Anim Series, we find the cranial vertebræ are *first* in order of time in fishes the skull alone presents true osseous development o all the segments of the typical bone; and if we go still lowe in the series, we find—in the Cephalopoda—a rudimenta brain, not unlike the lower forms of the brain in fishe enclosed in a rudimentary skull, but without a spinal co or spinal column. We are justified, therefore, in saying tha the skull cannot be a modification of the spinal column.

[1] *Reports of British Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1859, a *Physiology of Common Life*, vol. ii.

[2] "As the brain is a more voluminously developed spinal cord, so is t brain-case a more voluminous spinal column." OKEN; cited by OWE *Homologies*, p. 74.

Oken and Spix regard the head as a "repetition" of the trunk; the brain is a repetition of the spinal cord; the mouth repeats the intestine and abdomen; the nose repeats the lungs and thorax; the jaws the limbs. Unfortunately for this ingenious scheme, there are vertebrate animals with heads but without limbs; and it would therefore be nearer the mark to call the limbs modified jaws, than to call jaws modified limbs. In presence of such perplexities, we cannot wonder if some men have objected to the vertebral theory, that it amounts to nothing more than saying a vertebra is a bone.

The typical vertebra is thus defined by Owen: "One of those segments of the endoskeleton which constitutes the axis of the body and the protecting canals of the nervous and vascular trunks."[1] A perfect vertebra should therefore contain at least two arches, one to form the protecting walls of a nervous centre, the other to form the protecting walls of the great blood-vessels. Now if we make a section of the skull, we find that this bony box "consists of a strong central mass whence spring an upper arch and a lower arch. The upper arch is formed by the walls of the cavity containing the brain, and stands in the same relation to it as does the neural arch of a vertebra to the spinal cord with which that brain is continuous. The lower arch encloses the other viscera of the head, in the same way as the ribs embrace those of the thorax. And not only is the general analogy between the two manifest, but a young skull may readily be separated into a number of segments, in each of which it requires but little imagination to trace a sort of family likeness to such an expanded vertebra as the atlas."[2]

The luminous guide of anatomical research, by Geoffroy St. Hilaire named "le principe des connexions," will thus easily lead us to recognise the neural arches of the brain-case as homologues of the neural arches of the spinal axis, and we may ask with Huxley, "What can be more natural than to take another step to conceive the skull as a portion of the vertebral column still more altered than the sacrum or coccyx, whose vertebræ are modified in correspondence with the expansion of the anterior end of the nervous centre and the needs of the cephalic end of the body?" This was the question which flashed upon the poet's mind, and which indeed is so intimately allied to the morphological doctrines

[1] OWEN: *Homologies*, p. 81.
[2] HUXLEY: *Croonian Lecture*. 1858.

he had already found realised in plants, that far from estimating it as a discovery which reflects singular honour on his sagacity, I am disposed to think more lightly of it than of many a neglected sentence in his little studied essays. I say this, not because the idea seems obvious now it has been stated, and every one can make the egg stand on end after Columbus, but because in Goethe's attempt to carry his idea into anatomical detail, it is universally confessed that he was not successful. This is a point to which we shall presently return. Meanwhile I may add that, on re-examination of this complex subject, I am of opinion that neither Goethe nor Oken has been free from a certain indistinctness of conception, or has sufficiently kept before him all the elements of the problem. A fundamental mistake, already touched upon, is in the supposed relation of the skull to the spinal axis. Anatomists would scarcely venture to affirm that the brain bears the same relation to the cervical enlargement of the spinal cord, as that enlargement bears to the lumbar enlargement of the cord; yet they affirm, explicitly and implicitly, that the brain-case bears the same relation to the cervical vertebræ as those vertebræ bear to the lumbar. Whereas anatomy very plainly teaches that over and above certain fundamental resemblances between the brain and spinal cord, resemblances not much greater than between the sympathetic ganglia and the brain, there are also manifest and important differences, very early exhibited in the course of embryological development, and bringing with them corresponding differences in the protecting bones. And in this point of view the researches of embryologists, as expounded in Huxley's remarkable Croonian Lecture, seem decisive. I will cite here the conclusion to which Huxley is led: "The fallacy involved in the vertebral theory of the skull," he says, "is like that which before Von Baer infested our notions of the relations between fishes and mammals. The mammal was imagined to be a modified fish, whereas, in truth, both fish and mammal start from a common point, and each follow its own road thence. So I conceive what the facts teach us is this:—the spinal column and the skull start from the same primitive condition—a common central plate with its laminæ dorsales and ventrales—whence they immediately begin to diverge. The spinal column, in all cases, becomes segmented into its somatomes; and in the great majority of cases distinct centra and intercentra are developed, enclosing

the notocord more or less completely. The cranium never becomes segmented into somatomes; distinct centra and intercentra, like those of the spinal column, and never developed in it. Much of the basis cranii lies beyond the notocord. In the process of ossification there is a certain analogy between the spinal column and the cranium, but the analogy becomes weaker as we proceed towards the anterior end of the skull."

Although Huxley insists, perhaps, too much upon the *differences*, in his impatience at the too great emphasis which has been laid on the *resemblances*, his criticism seems to me conclusive against the vertebral theory as generally understood. It is certainly extending the principles of transcendental anatomy to a hazardous limit when the brain is regarded as a "repetition" of any segments of the spinal cord. The differences between the two are more than differences of volume and shape. In the one the grey matter is inside; in the other it is outside. From the one sensory and motor nerves, symmetrically in pairs, are given off to supply the skin and muscles; in the other the sensory and motor nerves are not only distributed in a very different manner—the optic, olfactory, and acoustic having no corresponding motor nerves—but they are limited to ganglia at the base and in the medulla oblongata: the two most voluminous and important parts of the brain (the cerebrum and cerebellum) having *no* nerves whatever. In the presence of such wide diversities as these, not to mention others, it is surely an abuse of language when Oken calls the brain a more voluminously developed spinal cord, and deduces thence that the brain-case is only a repetition of the spinal column.

Having thus endeavoured to convey some idea of the famous vertebral theory of the skull, I have now to consider a somewhat angrily debated question, affecting Goethe's character more than his intellectual pretensions, namely, the charge of mendacious vanity brought against him by Oken, and, I am sorry to say, very inconsiderately countenanced by Professor Owen,[1] in respect to priority in the discovery.

Fifteen years after Goethe had passed away from this world, and when therefore there was no power of reply, Oken in the *Isis* (1847, *Heft* vii.) made his charge. His statement completely staggered me, suggesting very painful feelings as to Goethe's conduct. Indeed, the similarity in the stories of

[1] Art. OKEN in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 8th edition.

both suggests suspicion. Goethe, during one of his rambl in the Jewish cemetery near Venice, noticed the skull of a ra which had been cut longitudinally, and on examining it, t idea occurred to him that the face was composed of thr vertebræ: "the transition from the anterior sphenoid to t ethmoid was evident at once." Now, compare Oken's sto He narrates how in 1802 in a work on the Senses, he h represented these organs as repetitions of lower organ although he had not then grasped the idea, which lay so clo at hand, respecting the skull as a repetition of the spi column. In 1803 he identified the jaws of insects as limbs the head; and in 1806, while rambling in the Harz mountai he picked up the skull of a deer: on examining it, he e claimed, "That is a vertebral column!" Virchow admits th the coincidence in the stories is singular, but adds that t discovery is just as probable in the one case as in the othe all that is proved by the coincidence being that both min were on the verge of the discovery. Goethe by long physio nomical and osteological studies was prepared for the ide and was naturally led from the Metamorphoses of Plants those of Insects; and if Oken reversed this order, passi from insects to mammals, he was, nevertheless, many yea later than Goethe, as dates unequivocally prove. It is i portant to bear in mind that the vertebral theory is on another application of those morphological doctrines whi Goethe had developed and applied to plants; and althou it is quite *possible* that he might have held these views witho making the special application to the skull; yet we know as fact that he at once saw how the morphological laws mu necessarily apply to animals, since he expressly states this announcing his discovery to Herder.[1] Nay, he shortly aft wards wrote, "In Natural History I shall bring you what y little expect. I believe myself to be very near the law organisation." Still it may be objected, this is no proof; only shows that Goethe applied his doctrines to the anim organisation, not that he made a special application to t skull. Even this doubt, however, has been finally settled the recently published correspondence, which gives us a let from Goethe to Herder's wife, dated 4th May 1790, fr Venice. "Through a singular and lucky accident I have be enabled to take a step forwards in my explanation of t

[1] *Italiänische Reise*, ii. p. 5.

nimal development (*Thierbildung*). My servant, in jest, took p the fragment of an animal's skull from the Jewish cemetery, retending to offer it me as a Jew's skull." Now when we emember that Goethe in after years affirmed that it was in 790, and in the Jewish cemetery of Venice, that the idea f the vertebral structure of the skull flashed upon him, the vidence of this letter is conclusive.

Oken declares he made his discovery in 1806, and that in 807 he wrote his Academic Programme. He was then a *Privat-Docent* in Göttingen, "at a time, therefore, when Goethe certainly knew nothing of my existence." He sent his issertation to Jena, where he had just been appointed pro- essor. Of that university Goethe was curator. Oken con- iders this fact decisive: namely, that Goethe would assuredly ave remonstrated against Oken's claim to the discovery had e not recognised its justice. The fact, however, is by no neans decisive: we shall see presently that Goethe had his own easons for silence. "I naturally sent Goethe a copy of my rogramme. This discovery pleased him so much that he nvited me, at Easter, 1808, to spend a week with him at Veimar, which I did. As long as the discovery was ridi- uled by men of science Goethe was silent, but no sooner did attain renown through the works of Meckel, Spix, and thers, than there grew up a murmur among Goethe's servile dmirers that this idea originated with him. About this time ojanus went to Weimar, and hearing of Goethe's discovery, alf believed it, and sent the rumour to me, which I thought- ssly printed in the *Isis* (1818, p. 509); whereupon I an- ounced that I made my discovery in the autumn of 1806." his is equivocal. He did *not* throw any doubt on Goethe's aim to priority, he only asserted his own originality. "Now at Bojanus had brought the subject forward," he adds, Goethe's vanity was piqued, and he came afterwards, thirteen ears subsequent to my discovery, and said he had held the pinion for thirty years."

Why was Goethe silent when Oken first announced his iscovery? and why did not Oken make the charge of agiarism during Goethe's lifetime? The first question may e answered from Goethe's own works. In a note entitled *as Schädelgerüst aus sechs Wirbelknochen auferbaut*, after luding to his recognition first of three and subsequently of x vertebræ in the skull, which he spoke of among his friends, no set to work to demonstrate it if possible, he says: "In

the year 1807 this theory appeared tumultuously and
perfectly before the public, and naturally awakened gr
disputes and some applause. How seriously it was damag
by the incomplete and fantastic method of exposition Hist
must relate." This criticism of the exposition will be unc
stood by every one who has read Oken, and who knc
Goethe's antipathy to metaphysics.[1] With all his prepossess
in favour of a Type, he could not patiently have accepted
exposition which "tumultuously" announced that "The wh
man is but a vertebra." Accordingly he took no notice of
tumultuous metaphysician; and in his *Tag und Jahres He*
he mentions that while he was working out his theory with t
friends, Riemer and Voigt, they brought him, with some s
prise, the news that this idea had just been laid before
public in an academic programme, "a fact," he adds, "*wh
they, being still alive, can testify.*" Why did he not cla
priority? "I told my friends to keep quiet, for the idea w
not properly worked out in the programme; and that it w
not elaborated from original observations would be plain
all scientific men. I was frequently besought to speak plai
on the subject; but I was firm in my silence."

When I first discussed this question, and knew nothing
the decisive evidence which lay unpublished in the letter
Herder's wife, I said that this statement carried complete c
viction to my mind. It was published many years bef
Oken made his charge, and it accused him in the most expli
terms of having prematurely disclosed an idea Goethe was th
elaborating with the assistance of his friends. Nor was t
all. It appealed to two honourable and respected men, th
living, as witnesses of the truth. Oken said nothing wh
the question could have been peremptorily settled by calli
upon Voigt and Riemer. He waited till death rendered
appeal impossible. He says, indeed, that he made no ansv
to the first passage I have cited, because he was not *nam*
in it, and he "did not wish to involve himself in a host
disagreeables." But this is no answer to the *second* passa
There he is named as plainly as if the name of Oken w
printed in full; and not only is he named, but Goethe's frie
speak of Oken's coming forward with Goethe's idea as
matter which "surprised" them. Those to whom this reas

[1] So also Cuvier's antipathy to this exposition made him blind to the t
which it contained.

ng was not conclusive are now referred to the confirmation it eceives from the letter to Herder's wife.

Having vindicated Goethe's character, and shown that *iographically* we are fully justified in assigning to him the nonour of having first conceived this theory, it now remains o be added that *historically* the priority of Oken's claim must e admitted. In writing the poet's biography, it is of some mportance to show that he was not indebted to Oken for the liscovery. In writing the history of science, it would be to Oken that priority would be assigned, simply because, accordng to the judicious principles of historical appreciation, riority of publication carries off the prize. No man's claim o priority is acknowledged unless he can bring forward the vidence of publication; otherwise every discovery might be laimed by those who have no right to it. Moreover, Oken as another claim: to him undeniably belongs the merit of aving introduced the idea into the scientific world, accompanied with sufficient amount of detail to make it acceptable o scientific minds, and to set them to work in verifying the dea. On these grounds I think it indisputable that the ertebral theory must be attributed to Oken, and not to Goethe; although it is not less indisputable that Goethe lid anticipate the discovery by sixteen years, and would have arned the right to claim it of History, had he made his disovery public, instead of privately discussing it with his friends. Virchow thinks otherwise; he assigns priority to Goethe; but he would, I am sure, admit the generally received principle hat priority of publication is the test upon which alone History an rely.

To conclude this somewhat lengthy chapter on the scientific tudies, it must be stated that, for the sake of bringing toether his various efforts into a manageable whole, I have not ttended strictly to chronology. Nor have I specified the arious separate essays he has written. They are all to be ound collected in his works. My main object has been to how what were the directions of his mind; what were his chievements and failures in Science; what place Science lled in his life, and how false the supposition is that he was mere dabbler. What Buffon says of Pliny may truly be said f Goethe, that he had *cette facilité de penser en grand qui ultiplie la science;* and it is only as a thinker in this great epartment that I claim a high place for him.

CHAPTER XI

THE CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE

We now return to the narrative, some points of which ha been anticipated in the preceding chapter. In 1790 Goeth undertook the government of all the Institutions for Scien and Art, and busied himself with the arrangement of th Museums and Botanical Gardens at Jena. In March of th same year he went once more to Italy to meet the Duche Amalia and Herder in Venice. There he tried in Science find refuge from troubled thoughts. Italy on a second vis seemed, however, quite another place to him. He began suspect there had been considerable illusion in the charm his first visit. The *Venetian Epigrams*, if compared with th *Roman Elegies*, will indicate the difference of his mood. Th yearning regret, the fulness of delight, the newness of wond which give their accents to the Elegies, are replaced b sarcasms and the bitterness of disappointment. It is tru that many of these epigrams were written subsequently, their contents prove, but the mass of them are products the Venetian visit. Something of this dissatisfaction must b attributed to his position. He was ill at ease with the worl The troubles of the time, and the troubles of his own domest affairs, aggravated the dangers which then threatened his ain of self-culture, and increased his difficulty in finding that pa in Science and Art whereon the culture of the world might b pursued.

In June he returned to Weimar. In July the duke se for him at the Prussian Camp in Silesia, "where, instead stones and flowers, he would see the field sown with troops He went unwillingly, but compensated himself by active r searches into "stones and flowers," leaving to the duke ar others such interest as was to be found in soldiers. He liv like a hermit in the camp, and began to write an essay on th development of animals, and a comic opera.

In August they returned. The Duchess Amalia and Herde impatient at "such waste of time over old bones," plagu him into relinquishing osteology, and urged him to comple *Wilhelm Meister*. He did not, however, proceed far with The creative impulse was past; and to disprove Newton w

a more imperious desire. In 1791, which was a year of quiet study and domestic happiness for him, the Court Theatre was established. He undertook the direction with delight. In a future chapter we shall follow his efforts to create a national stage, and by bringing them before the eye in one continuous series, save the tedious repetition of isolated details. In July the Duchess Amalia founded her Friday Evenings. Her palace, between the hours of five and eight, saw the duke, the Duchess Luise, Goethe and his circle, with a few favoured friends from the court, assembled to hear some one of the members read a composition of his own. No sort of etiquette was maintained. Each member, on entering, sat down where he pleased. Only for the Reader was a distinct place allotted. One night Goethe read them the genealogy of Cagliostro, which he had brought from Italy; another night he gave them a lecture on Colours; Herder lectured on Immortality; Bertuch on Chinese Colours and English Gardens; Böttiger on the Vases of the Ancients; Hufeland on his favourite theme of Longevity; and Bode read fragments of his translation of Montaigne. When the reading was over, they all approached a large table in the middle of the room, on which lay some engravings or some novelty of interest, and friendly discussion began. The absence of etiquette made these reunions delightful.

The mention of Cagliostro in the preceding paragraph recalls Goethe's comedy *Der Gross Kophta*, in which he dramatised the story of the Diamond Necklace. It had originally been arranged as an opera; Reichardt was to have composed the music; and if the reader happens to have waded through this dull comedy, he will regret that it was not made an opera, or anything else except what it is. One is really distressed to find such productions among the writings of so great a genius, and exasperated to find critics lavish in their praise of a work which their supersubtle ingenuity cannot rescue from universal neglect. I will not occupy space with an analysis of it.

And now he was to be torn from his quiet studies to follow the fortunes of an unquiet camp. The King of Prussia and the Duke of Brunswick at the head of a large army invaded France, to restore Louis XVI. to his throne, and save legitimacy from the sacrilegious hands of Sansculottism. France, it was said, groaned under the tyranny of factions, and yearned for deliverance. The emigrants made it clear as day that the

allies would be welcomed by the whole nation; and th German rulers willingly lent their arms to the support c legitimacy. Karl August, passionately fond of the arm received the command of a Prussian regiment. And Goethe passionately fond of Karl August, followed him into the fiel But he followed the duke—he had no sympathy with th cause. Indeed, he had no strong feeling either way. Legiti macy was no passion with him; still less was Republicanism Without interest in passing politics, profoundly convinced tha all salvation could only come through inward culture, an dreading disturbances mainly because they rendered cultur impossible, he was emphatically the "Child of Peace," an could at no period of his life be brought to sympathise wit great struggles. He disliked the Revolution as he dislike the Reformation, because they both thwarted the peacefu progress of development:

> Franzthum drängt in diesen verworrenen Tagen wie ehmals Lutherthum es gethan, ruhige Bildung zurück.

That philosophers and patriots should thunder against suc a doctrine, refute its arguments, and proclaim its dangers, i reasonable enough; but how strangely unreasonable in philo sophers and patriots to thunder against Goethe, because he holding this doctrine, wrote and acted in its spirit! We d not need this example to teach us how men transfer thei hatred of opinions to the holders of the hated opinions otherwise we might wonder at the insensate howl which ha been raised against the greatest glory of the German name because he did not share the opinions of the howlers opinions, too, which they for the most part would not hav held, had they not been instructed by the events which hav since given approbation to what *then* seemed madness.

It was not in Goethe's nature to be much moved by event to be deeply interested in the passing troubles of external life A meditative mind like his naturally sought in the eterna principles of Nature the stimulus and the food, which othe minds sought in passing phenomena of the day. A poet an a philosopher is bound to be interested in the great question of poetry and philosophy; but to rail at him for not als taking part in politics, is as irrational as to rail at the prim minister because he cares not two pins for Greek Art, and ha no views on the transmutation of species. It is said, and ver foolishly said, that Goethe turned from politics to art an

science, because politics disturbed him, and because he was too *selfish* to interest himself in the affairs of others. But this accusation is on a par with those ungenerous accusations which declare heterodoxy to be the shield of profligacy: as if doubts proceeded only from dissolute habits. How unselfish Goethe was, those best know who know him best; it would be well if we could say so much of many who devote themselves to patriotic schemes. Patriotism may be quite as selfish as Science or Art, even when it is a devout conviction; nor is it likely to be less selfish when, as so often happens, patriotism is only an uneasy pauperism.

That Goethe sincerely desired the good of mankind, and that he laboured for it in his way with a perseverance few have equalled, is surely enough to absolve him from the charge of selfishness, because his labours did not take the special direction of politics? What his opinions were is one thing, another thing his conduct. Jean Paul says, "he was more far-sighted than the rest of the world, for in the beginning of the French Revolution he despised the patriots as much as he did at the end." I do not detect any feeling so deep as contempt, either late or early; but it is certain that while Klopstock and others were madly enthusiastic at the opening of this terrible drama, they were as madly fanatical against it before its close; whereas Goethe seems to have held pretty much the same opinion throughout. It has been finely said: "Toute période historique a deux faces: l'une assez pauvre, assez ridicule, ou assez malheureuse, qui est tournée vers le calendrier du temps; l'autre grande, efficace, et sérieuse, qui regarde celui de l'éternité." Of no epoch is this more strikingly true than of the French Revolution. In it Goethe only saw the temporal aspect; his want of historical philosophy prevented him from seeing the eternal aspect.

There were three principles promulgated by the Republicans, which to him were profound absurdities. The first was the doctrine of equality; not simply of equality in the eye of the law (that he accepted), but of absolute equality. His study of Nature, no less than his study of men, led him, as it could not but lead him, to the conviction that each Individual is perfect in itself, and in so far equals the highest; but that no one Individual is exactly like another.

Gleich sei keiner dem Andern; doch gleich sei Jeder dem Höchsten.
Wie das zu machen? es sei Jeder vollendet in sich.

The second revolutionary principle was the doctrine of govern ment by the people. He believed in no such government power. Even when you kill the king, he says, you do n know how to rule in his place.

> Sie gönnten Cäsar'n das Reich nicht,
> Und wussten's nicht zu regieren.

He pointed to the fate of France "as a lesson both t governors and the governed, but more even for the latte than the former. The rulers were destroyed, but who wa there to protect the Many *against* the Many? The Mo became the Tyrant."

> Frankreichs traurig Geschick, die Grossen mögen's bedenken;
> Aber bedenken fürwahr sollen es Kleine noch mehr.
> Grosse gingen zu Grunde: doch wer beschützte die Menge
> Gegen die Menge? Da war Menge der Menge Tyrann.

What wonder then if he felt repulsion to all the "Apostles c Freedom," when on close scrutiny he found they all sough nothing but license?

> Alle Freiheits-Apostel, sie waren mir immer zuwider
> Willkür suchte doch nur Jeder am ende für sich.

The third revolutionary principle was, that political freedo is necessary to man. In the early days of authorship he ha already spoken his conviction that such freedom was by n means necessary. In *Egmont* it reappears; and through lif we find him insisting on the fact that no man *can* be free; th only freedom necessary is that which enables each to go abou his business in security, to rear house and children, to mov unconstrained in his small circle. It does not seem to occu to him that even this freedom is impossible without politica freedom. It does not occur to him that police regulation affect the individual, and governmental regulations affec the nation.[1]

But while he was thus fundamentally opposed to th principles of the Revolution, and the government of th Many, it is equally clear that he had no sympathy with th

[1] This was Dr. Johnson's opinion: "Sir, I would not give a guinea to liv under one form of government rather than another. It is of no moment t the happiness of an individual. Sir, the danger of the abuse of power nothing to a private man. What Frenchman is prevented from passing hi life as he pleases?"—BOSWELL, chap. xxvi. No one thinks this opinion proof of Johnson's heartless egoism.

Royalists; that he absolved neither their policy nor their acts. The madness of the Terrorists was to him no excuse for the duplicity of the Royalists. "No, you are not right. No, you must not deceive the Mob, because the Mob is wild and foolish. Wild and foolish are all Mobs which have been duped. Be only *upright* with them, and you will gradually train them to be men."

> Sage, thun wir nicht recht? Wir müssen den Pöbel betrügen.
> Sieh' nur, wie ungeschickt, sieh' nur, wie wild er sich zeigt!—
> Ungeschickt und wild sind alle rohen Betrognen;
> Seid nur *redlich*, und so führt ihn zum Menschlichen an.

Nor was all the wild oratory so irrational in his eyes as the Royalists proclaimed it. "These street orators seem to me also mad; but a madman will speak wisdom in freedom, when in slavery wisdom is dumb."

> Mir auch scheinen sie toll; doch redet ein Toller
> Weise Sprüche, wenn, ach! Weisheit im Sclaven verstummt.

To Eckermann he said: "A revolution is always the fault of the government, never of the people."

I might extend these remarks by showing how such political principles naturally grew up in the course of his education, and how he, in the forty-third year of his age, was not likely to become an apostle of Freedom, or to become deeply interested in political disturbances, especially at this period when he had completely emerged from the rebellious strivings of his youth, and had settled the aims of manhood. But enough has been said to show what his position truly was; and the reader who will not accept it with that impartiality which it claims, will certainly not accept it more readily, because he is told its origin and growth. The American who despises the Negro because he is black, will not despise him less on learning that the blackness is nothing but a peculiar modification of the pigment in the skin.

Goethe has himself written a diary of the "Campaign in France," [1] and if I had any belief in the reader's following the advice, I would advise him to read that work, and save some pages of this volume. In well-grounded suspicion that he will do nothing of the kind, I select a few details of interest, and string them on a thread of narrative.

[1] It has been translated by Mr. Robert Farie. The extracts which follow are from this translation.

The Allies entered France, believing the campaign would b a mere promenade. Longwy they were assured would soo surrender, and the people receive them with open arm Longwy did surrender; but the people, so far from showin any disposition to welcome them, everywhere manifested th most determined resistance. The following passage will l us pretty clearly into the secret of Goethe's views. "Thu did the Prussians, Austrians, and a portion of the Frenc come to carry on their warlike operations on the Frenc soil. By whose power and authority did they this? The might have done it in their own name. War had bee partly declared against them—their league was no secret but another pretext was invented. They took the field i the name of Louis XVI.: they exacted nothing, but the borrowed compulsorily. *Bons* had been printed, which th commander signed; but whoever had them in his possessio filled them up at his pleasure, according to circumstances, an Louis XVI. was to pay. Perhaps, after the manifesto, nothin had so much exasperated the people against the monarchy a did this treatment. I was myself present at a scene which remember as a most tragic one. Several shepherds, who ha succeeded in uniting their flocks, in order to conceal them fo safety in the forests or other retired places, being seized b some active patrols and brought to the army, were at firs well received and kindly treated. They were asked wh were the different proprietors: the flocks were separated an counted. Anxiety and fear, but still with some hope, fluctuate in the countenances of the worthy people. But when thi mode of proceeding ended in the division of the flocks amon the regiment and companies, whilst, on the other hand, th pieces of paper drawn on Louis XVI. were handed ove quite civilly to their proprietors, and their woolly favourite were slaughtered at their feet by the impatient and hungr soldiers, I confess that my eyes and my soul have seldo witnessed a more cruel spectacle, and more profound man suffering in all its gradations. The Greek tragedies alon have anything so purely, deeply pathetic."

Throughout these pages he is seen interesting himself i men, in science, in nature,—but not at all in the cause of th war. Soldiers fishing attract him to their side, and he is i ecstasies with the optical phenomena observed in the wate The bombardment of Verdun begins, and he enters a batte which is hard at work, but is driven out by the intolerable ro

f the cannon; on his way out he meets the Prince Reuss. We walked up and down behind some vineyard walls, protected by them from the cannon-balls. After talking about undry political matters by which we only got entangled in a abyrinth of hopes and cares, the prince asked me what I was ccupied with at present, and was much surprised when, instead f speaking of tragedies and novels, excited by the phenomenon f to-day, I began to speak with great animation of the doctrine f colours." He has been reproached for this "indifference," nd by men who extol Archimedes for having prosecuted his tudies during the siege of Syracuse. It was as natural for Goethe o have his mind occupied with a curious phenomenon amid ne roar of cannon, as it was for the soldiers to sing libertine ongs when marching to death. The camp too afforded him, ith its opportunities for patience, some good opportunities or observing mankind. He notices the injurious influence of ar upon the mind: "You are daring and destructive one ay, and humane and creative the next; you accustom yourelf to phrases adapted to excite and keep alive hope in the idst of most desperate circumstances; by this means a kind f hypocrisy is produced of an unusual character, and is disnguished from the priestly and courtly kind."

After detailing some of the miseries of the campaigning life, e says: "Happy is he whose bosom is filled with a higher assion. The colour phenomenon observed at the spring ever for a moment left me. I thought it over and over again, hat I might be able to make experiments on it. I dictated to ogel a loose sketch of my theory, and drew the figures afterards. These papers I still possess with all the marks of the ainy weather, as witnesses of the faithful study in the dubious ath I had entered." Very characteristic of his thirst for nowledge is this daring exposure of himself: "I had heard uch of the cannon fever, and I wanted to know what kind of ning it was. Ennui and a spirit which every kind of danger xcited to daring, nay, even to rashness, induced me to ride p quite coolly to the outwork of La Lune. This was again ccupied by our people; but it presented the wildest aspect. he roofs were shot to pieces, the cornshocks scattered about, ne bodies of men mortally wounded stretched upon them here nd there, and occasionally a spent cannon-ball fell and rattled mong the ruins of the tile-roofs. Quite alone, and left to yself, I rode away on the heights to the left, and could lainly survey the favourable position of the French: they

were standing in the form of a semicircle, in the greatest qui
and security; Kellermann, on the left wing, being the easie
to reach. . . . I had now arrived quite in the region where th
balls were playing across me: the sound of them is curio
enough, as if it were composed of the humming of tops, th
gurgling of water, and the whistling of birds. They were le
dangerous by reason of the wetness of the ground; wherev
one fell it stuck fast. And thus my foolish experimental ric
was secured against the danger at least of the balls reboundin
In these circumstances, I was soon able to remark that som
thing unusual was taking place within me: I paid close atte
tion to it, and still the sensation can be described only b
similitude. It appeared as if you were in some extremely h
place, and at the same time quite penetrated by the heat of
so that you feel yourself, as it were, quite one with the eleme
in which you are. The eyes lose nothing of their strength
clearness; but it is as if the world had a kind of brown-re
tint, which makes the situation, as well as the surroundi
objects, more impressive. I was unable to perceive a
agitation of the blood, but everything seemed rather to b
swallowed up in the glow of which I speak. From this, the
it is clear in what sense this condition can be called a feve
It is remarkable, however, that the horrible uneasy feelin
arising from it is produced in us solely through the ears. F
the cannon thunder, the howling, whistling, crashing of th
balls through the air, is the real cause of these sensation
After I had ridden back, and was in perfect security,
remarked with surprise that the glow was completely e
tinguished, and not the slightest feverish agitation was le
behind. On the whole, this condition is one of the lea
desirable, as indeed among my dear and noble comrades,
found scarcely one who expressed a really passionate desire
try it. Thus the day had passed away; the French stoo
immovable, Kellermann having taken also a more adva
tageous position. Our people were withdrawn out of the fi
and it was exactly as if nothing had taken place. The greate
consternation was diffused among the army. That ve
morning they had thought of nothing short of spitting th
whole of the French and devouring them; nay, I myself h
been tempted to take part in this dangerous expedition fro
the unbounded confidence I felt in such an army and in th
Duke of Brunswick; but now every one went about alon
nobody looked at his neighbour, or if it did happen, it was

urse or to swear. Just as night was coming on, we had ccidentally formed ourselves into a circle, in the middle of hich the usual fire even could not be kindled: most of them ere silent, some spoke, and in fact the power of reflection nd judgment was awanting to all. At last I was called upon o say what I thought of it; for I had been in the habit of nlivening and amusing the troop with short sayings. This me I said: From this place and from this day forth comnences a new era in the world's history, and you can all say nat you were present at its birth."

The night brought rain and wind. They had lain on the round behind a hill which protected them from the cutting ind, when it was proposed that they should bury themselves n the earth, covered by their cloaks. Holes were dug, and ven Karl August himself did not refuse this "premature urial." Goethe wrapped himself in a blanket and slept etter than Ulysses. In vain a colonel remonstrated, and ointed out to them that the French had a battery on the pposite hill with which they could bury the sleepers in real arnest. Sleep and warmth for the present were worth more nan security against possible danger.

The defeat at Valmy, slight as it was, discouraged the russians, and exhilarated the French. The Prussians, startled t the cry of *vive la nation!* with which the republicans charged nem, and finding themselves on a foreign territory without nagazines, stores, or any preparations for a great conflict, erceived the mistake they had made, and began to retreat. t was doubtless a great relief to Goethe to hear that he had ot much longer to endure the hardships of campaigning. Ie had no interest in the cause, and he had not gained, by loser contact with the leaders, a higher opinion of their naracters. "Although I had already found among the iplomatic corps some genuine and valuable friends, I could ot refrain, so often as I saw them in the midst of these great novements, from making some odd comparisons which forced nemselves irresistibly upon my mind: they appeared to me as o many playhouse directors, who choose the pieces, distribute ne parts, and move about unseen; whilst the actors, doing neir best, and well prompted, have to commit the result of neir exertions to fortune and the humour of the public."

He fell in with a collection of pamphlets, and among them ere the instructions of the Notables. "The moderation of ne people's demands at this time, the modesty with which

they were put forward, formed a striking contrast to th violence, insolence, and desperation of the present state o things. I read these papers with genuine emotion, and too copies of some of them."

His return was slow. Meanwhile, the arms of the Frenc seemed everywhere victorious. Verdun and Longwy wer once more occupied by the republicans. On the Rhine, Treve and Mainz had capitulated to Custine. Goethe says:

"In the midst of this misery and confusion, a missing lette of my mother's found me, and reminded me, in a strang manner, of many peaceful passages of my youth, and circum stances connected with my family and native town. My uncle the Alderman Textor, had died, whose near relationship ha excluded me, during his lifetime, from the honourable an useful post of a Frankfurt councillor; and now, in accordanc with an established and laudable custom, they thought immedi ately of me, I being pretty far advanced among the Frankfu graduates. My mother had been commissioned to ask m whether I would accept the office of councillor if I wer chosen one of those to be balloted for, and the golden ba should fall to me? Such a question could not, perhaps, hav arrived at a more singular time than the present; I was take by surprise, and thrown back upon myself; a thousand image started up before me, and prevented me from forming any con nected conclusion. But as a sick person or prisoner forget for the moment his pains and troubles whilst listening to som tale which is related to him, so was I also carried back to othe spheres and other times. I found myself in my grandfather' garden, where the espaliers, richly laden with nectarines, wer wont to tempt the grandson's longing appetite; and only th threat of banishment from this paradise, only the hope c receiving from the good old grandfather's own hand the red cheeked fruit when ripe, could restrain this longing withi reasonable bounds till the proper time at length arrived. The I saw the venerable old man busied with his roses, and care fully protecting his hands from the thorns with the antiquaria gloves, delivered up as tribute by tax-freed cities; like th noble Laertes,—all but in his longings and his sorrows. Afte wards I saw him in his mayor's robes, with gold chain, sittin on the throne-seat under the emperor's portrait; then, last c all, alas! in his dotage, for several years in his sick chair; an finally, in his grave! On my last journey to Frankfurt, I ha found my uncle in possession of the house, court, and garden

is a worthy son of such a father, he attained, like him, the highest offices in the government of this free town. Here, in his intimate family circle, in this unchanged old well-known place, these boyhood recollections were vividly called forth, and brought with new emphasis before me. They were united also with other youthful feelings which I must not conceal. What citizen of a free city will deny that he has been ambitious of, sooner or later, rising to the dignity of councillor, alderman, or burgomaster; and has industriously and carefully striven, to the best of his ability, to attain to them, or perhaps other less important offices? For the pleasing thought of one day filling some post in the government is awakened early in the breast of every republican, and is liveliest and proudest in the soul of a boy. I could not, however, abandon myself long to these pleasing dreams of my childhood. But, too soon aroused, I surveyed the ominous locality which surrounded me, the melancholy circumstances which hemmed me in, and, at the same time, the cloudy obscured prospect in the direction of my native town. I saw Mentz in the hands of the French; Frankfurt threatened, if not already taken; the way to it obstructed; and within those walls, streets, squares, dwellings, the friends of my youth, and my relations, already overtaken perhaps by the same misfortunes from which I had seen Longwy and Verdun so cruelly suffer: who would have dared to rush headlong into the midst of such a state of things? But even in the happiest days of that venerable corporation, it would have been impossible for me to agree to this proposal; the reasons for which are easily explained. For twelve years I had enjoyed singular good fortune,—the confidence as well as the indulgence of the Duke of Weimar. This highly-gifted and cultivated prince was pleased to approve of my inadequate services, and gave me facilities for developing myself, which would have been impossible under no other conditions in my native country. My gratitude was boundless, as well as my attachment to his August consort and mother, to his young family, and to a country to which I had not been altogether unserviceable. And had I not to think also of newly-acquired, highly-cultivated friends, and of so many other domestic enjoyments and advantages which had sprung from my favourable and settled position?"

A pleasant surprise was in store for him on his return to Weimar, in the shape of the house in the *Frauenplan*, which the duke had ordered to be rebuilt during his absence. This

house, considered a palace in those days, was a very munifice gift. It was not so far advanced in the reconstruction but th he could fashion it according to his taste; he arranged th splendid staircase, which was too large for the proportions the house, but was a pleasant reminiscence of Italy.

The passer-by sees, through the windows, the busts of t Olympian gods, which stand there as symbols of calmness a completeness. On entering the hall, the eye rests upon tw noble casts, in niches; or rests on the plan of Rome whi decorates the wall, and on Meyer's *Aurora*, which colours t ceiling. The group of Ildefonso stands near the door; and the threshold, welcome speaks in the word "SALVE." On t first floor we enter the Juno room, so called from the colos bust of Juno which consecrates it; on the walls are the *Log* of Raphael. To the left of this stands the Reception roo in it is the harpsichord which furnished many a musi evening: Hummel and the young Mendelssohn played it, Catalani and Sontag sang to it. Over the doors we Meyer's mythological cartoons; on the walls a copy of Al brandi's Wedding, with sketches of the great masters, a etchings. A large cabinet contained the engravings and gem a side closet the bronze statuettes, lamps and vases. On t other side, connected with the Juno room and opposite t Reception room, were three small rooms. The first contain sketches of Italian masters, and a picture by Angelica Ka mann. The second and third contained various specimens earthenware, and an apparatus to illustrate the *Farbenleh* A prolongation of the Juno room backwards was the B room, with the busts of Schiller, Herder, Jacobi, Vos, Ster Byron, &c. To this succeeded, a few steps lower, and openi on the trellised staircase leading to the garden, a small ro in which he was fond of dining with a small party. The gard was tastefully laid out. The summer-houses contained natural history collections.

But the sanctuary of the house is the study, library, a bedroom. In the rooms just described the visitor sees t tokens of Goethe's position as minister and lover of A Compared with the Weimar standard of that day, these roo were of palatial magnificence; but compared even with t Weimar standard, the rooms into which we now enter are a more than bourgeois simplicity. Passing through an an chamber, where in cupboards stand his mineralogical coll tions, we enter the study, a low-roofed narrow room, somew

ark, for it is lighted only through two tiny windows, and rnished with a simplicity quite touching to behold.[1] In the entre stands a plain oval table of unpolished oak. No arm-hair is to be seen, no sofa, nothing which speaks of ease. A lain hard chair has beside it the basket in which he used to lace his handkerchief. Against the wall, on the right, is a ng pear-tree table, with book-shelves, on which stand lexicons nd manuals. Here hangs a pincushion, venerable in dust, ith the visiting cards, and other trifles, which death has made acred. Here, also, a medallion of Napoleon, with this cir-mscription: "Scilicet immenso superest ex nomine multum." n the side wall, again, a bookcase with some works of poets. n the wall to the left is a long desk of soft wood, at which e was wont to write. On it lie the original manuscripts of *Götz* and the *Elegies*, and a bust of Napoleon, in milk-white ass, which in the light shimmers with blue and flame colour; ence prized as an illustration of the *Farbenlehre*. A sheet of aper with notes of contemporary history is fastened near the oor, and behind this door schematic tables of music and ology. The same door leads into a bedroom, if bedroom it n be called, which no maid-of-all-work in England would cept without a murmur: it is a closet with a window. A mple bed, an arm-chair by its side, and a tiny washing-table th a small white basin on it, and a sponge, is all the furni-re. To enter this room with any feeling for the greatness d goodness of him who slept here, and who here slept his st sleep, brings tears into our eyes, and makes the breathing ep.

From the other side of the study we enter the library; which ould rather be called a lumber-room of books. Rough deal elves hold the books, with paper labels on which are written hilosophy," "history," "poetry," &c., to indicate the classi-ation. It was very interesting to look over this collec-n, and the English reader will imagine the feelings with ich I took down a volume of *Taylor's Historic Survey German Poetry*, sent by Carlyle, and found, in the piece paper used as a book-mark, a bit of Carlyle's own hand-iting.

Such was Goethe's House, during the many years of his cupation. At the time of which we now write it was of urse somewhat different. The pleasure of reconstructing it,

[1] I describe it as it now stands, just as it was on the day of his death.

and the happiness of being once more at home with Christian and his boy, able to pursue his studies in peace, were agreeable contrasts with his life in the camp. Meyer had returned from Italy, and came to live with him. Meyer's historical knowledge and true friendship made him very valuable. Optical studies alternated with discussions upon Art.

In this year, 1793, much was studied, but little produced. The comedy of the *Bürgergeneral* was written, that of the *Aufgeregten* was commenced, and the *Unterhaltungen der Ausgewanderten* planned. More important was the version of *Reinecke Fuchs*. All these are products of the French Revolution. The *Bürgergeneral* is really an amusing little piece setting forth the absurdity of loud-mouthed patriotism; but it has greatly incensed all those who are angry with Goethe for not having espoused the cause of the Revolution. It is admitted that there was much in the Revolution which was hollow, foolish, and wicked; but the Revolution was too serious a thing to be treated only with ridicule. I quite agree with this opinion. But considering his sentiments and position, it seems to me quite natural that he who neither sympathised with the Revolution, nor absolved the Royalists who could therefore neither write dithyrambs of freedom nor cries of indignation; who did not fully appreciate the historic importance of the event, and only saw its temporal and *personal* aspect, should have taken to Comedy, and to Comedy alone. He did not write invectives; he did not write satires. He saw the comic aspect, and he smiled. As events deepened the shadows of the picture, he, too, became more serious. The *Aufgeregten*, which was never completed, would have given a complete expression to his political views. *Reinecke Fuchs* was commenced as a relief; it was turned to as a "unholy World-bible," wherein the human race exhibited in unadorned and unfeigned animal nature with marvellous humour, in contrast to the bloody exhibition which the Reign of Terror then offered as a spectacle to the world.

He was now, May 1794, once more to join the army which was besieging Mainz. The narrative, which is also to be found in Mr. Farie's translation, presents him in no new aspect, and may therefore be passed over with this allusion. The city capitulated on the 24th of July, and on the 28th of August—his forty-fifth birthday—he re-entered Weimar; to finish *Reinecke Fuchs*, and to pursue his scientific researches. "I go home," he wrote to Jacobi, "where I can draw a circle

ound me, in which nothing can enter, save Love and Friendhip, Science and Art. I will not complain of the past, for I ave learnt much that was valuable." Experience is the only choolmaster; although, as Jean Paul says, "the school-fees re somewhat heavy." Goethe was always willing to pay the ees, if he could but get the instruction.

BOOK THE SIXTH

1794 TO 1805

"Für mich war es ein neuer Frühling, in welchem alles froh neben einand keimte, und aus aufgeschlossenen Samen und Zweigen hervorging."

Denn Er war unser! Mag das stolze Wort
Den lauten Schmerz gewaltig übertönen.
Er mochte sich bei uns, im sichern Port
Nach wildem Sturm zum Dauernden gewöhnen.
Indessen schritt sein Geist gewaltig fort
Ins Ewige des Wahren, Guten, Schönen,
Und hinter ihm, im wesenlosen Scheine
Lag, was uns Alle bändigt, das Gemeine!
GOETHE, OF SCHILLER.

CHAPTER I

GOETHE AND SCHILLER

THERE are few nobler spectacles than the friendship of tw great men; and the History of Literature presents nothin comparable to the friendship of Goethe and Schiller. Th friendship of Montaigne and Etienne de la Boëtie wa perhaps, more passionate and entire; but it was the unio of two kindred natures, which from the first moment di covered their affinity, not the union of two rivals incessantl contrasted by partisans, and originally disposed to hold alo from each other. Rivals Goethe and Schiller were, and are natures in many respects directly antagonistic; chiefs opposing camps, and brought into brotherly union only b what was highest in their natures and their aims.

To look on these great rivals was to see at once the profound dissimilarity. Goethe's beautiful head had the cal victorious grandeur of the Greek ideal; Schiller's the earne beauty of a Christian looking towards the Future. Th massive brow, and large-pupilled eyes,—like those given b Raphael to the infant Christ, in the matchless Madonna San Sisto,—the strong and well-proportioned features, line indeed by thought and suffering, yet showing that thought an suffering have troubled, but not vanquished, the strong ma —a certain healthy vigour in the brown skin, and an ind

cribable something which shines out from the face, make Goethe a striking contrast to Schiller, with his eager eyes, arrow brow,—tense and intense,—his irregular features lined y thought and suffering, and weakened by sickness. The ne *looks*, the other *looks out*. Both are majestic; but one as the majesty of repose, the other of conflict. Goethe's ame is massive, imposing; he seems much taller than he is. chiller's frame is disproportioned, he seems less than he is. Goethe holds himself stiffly erect; the long-necked Schiller walks like a camel."[1] Goethe's chest is like the torso of heseus; Schiller's is bent, and has lost a lung.

A similar difference is traceable in details. "An air that as beneficial to Schiller acted on me like poison," Goethe aid to Eckermann. "I called on him one day, and as I did ot find him at home, I seated myself at his writing-table to ote down various matters. I had not been seated long, efore I felt a strange indisposition steal over me, which gradu- lly increased, until at last I nearly fainted. At first I did not now to what cause I should ascribe this wretched and to me nusual state, until I discovered that a dreadful odour issued om a drawer near me. When I opened it, I found to my stonishment that it was full of rotten apples. I immediately ent to the window and inhaled the fresh air, by which I was nstantly restored. Meanwhile his wife came in, and told me hat the drawer was always filled with rotten apples, because he scent was beneficial to Schiller, and he could not live or ork without it."

As another and not unimportant detail, characterising the ealthy and unhealthy practice of literature, it may be added hat Goethe wrote in the freshness of morning, entirely free om stimulus; Schiller worked in the feverish hours of night, timulating his languid brain with coffee and champagne.

In comparing one to a Greek ideal, the other to a Christian deal, it has already been implied that one was the representa- ve of Realism, the other of Idealism. Goethe has himself ndicated the capital distinction between them: Schiller was nimated with the idea of Freedom; Goethe, on the contrary, as animated with the idea of Nature. This distinction runs

[1] This picturesque phrase was uttered by Tieck, the sculptor, to Rauch, om whom I heard it. Let me add that Schiller's brow is called in the text, narrow," in defiance of Dannecker's bust, with which I compared Schiller's ull, and found that the sculptor, as usual, had grossly departed from truth his desire to idealise. Artists always believe they know better than Nature.

through their works: Schiller always pining for something greater than Nature, wishing to make men Demigods; Goethe always striving to let Nature have free development, and produce the highest forms of Humanity. The Fall of Man was to Schiller the happiest of all events, because thereby men fell away from pure *instinct* into conscious *freedom;* with this sense of freedom came the possibility of Morality. To Goethe this seemed paying a price for Morality which was higher than Morality was worth; he preferred the ideal of a condition wherein Morality was unnecessary. Much as he might prize a good police, he prized still more a society in which a police would never be needed.

But while the contrast between these two is the contrast of real and ideal, of *objective* and *subjective* tendencies, apparent when we consider the men in their totality, this is only true of them relatively to each other. To speak of Goethe as a Realist, pure and simple, is erroneous; and to speak of Schiller as an Idealist, pure and simple, is not less so. Gervinus strikingly remarks that, compared with Nicolai or Lichtenberg, Goethe appears as an Idealist; compared with Kant and his followers, Schiller appears as a Realist. If Schiller, in comparison with Goethe, must be called a self-conscious poet, in comparison with the Romanticists, he is *naïve* and instinctive. Indeed, all such classifications are necessarily imperfect, and must only be used as artifices of language, by which certain general and predominant characteristics may be briefly indicated. Goethe and Schiller were certainly different natures; but had they been so fundamentally opposed, as it is the fashion to consider them, they could never have become so intimately united. They were opposite and allied, with something of the same differences and resemblances as are traceable in the Greek and Roman Mars. In the Greek Mythology the God of War had not the prominent place he attained in Rome; and the Greek sculptors, when they represented him, represented him as the victor returning, after conflict, to repose: holding in his hand the olive branch, while at his feet sate Eros. The Roman sculptors, or those who worked for Rome, represented Mars as the God of War in all his terrors, in the very act of leading on to victory. But, different as these two conceptions were, they were both conceptions of the God of War; Goethe may be likened to the one, and Schiller to the other: both were kindred spirits united by a common purpose.

Having touched upon the points of contrast, it will now be

heedful to say a word on those points of resemblance which erved as the basis of their union. It will be unnecessary to instance the obvious points which two such poets must have had in common; the mention of some less obvious will suffice or our present purpose. They were both profoundly convinced that Art was no luxury of leisure, no mere amusement o charm the idle, or relax the careworn; but a mighty nfluence, serious in its aims although pleasurable in its neans; a sister of Religion, by whose aid the great world-cheme was wrought into reality. This was with them no here sonorous phrase. They were thoroughly in earnest. They believed that Culture would raise Humanity to its full owers; and they, as artists, knew no Culture equal to that of rt. It was probably a perception of this belief that made Carl Grün say, "Goethe was the most ideal Idealist the earth ath ever borne; an *æsthetic* Idealist." And hence the origin of he wide-spread error that Goethe "only looked at life as an rtist," *i.e.* cared only for human nature inasmuch as it afforded im materials for Art; a point which will be more fully xamined hereafter. (*Book* vii. *ch.* 4.) The phases of their evelopment had been very similar, and had brought them o a similar standing-point. They both began rebelliously; hey both emerged from titanic lawlessness in emerging from outh to manhood. In Italy the sight of ancient masterpieces ompleted Goethe's metamorphosis. Schiller had to work hrough his in the gloomy north, and under the constant ressure of anxieties. He, too, pined for Italy, and thought he climate of Greece would make him a poet. But his tense and historical mind found neither stimulus nor enjoyent in plastic Art. Noble men and noble deeds were the od which nourished his great soul. "His poetic purification me from moral ideals; whereas in Goethe the moral ideal me from the artistic."[1] Plutarch was his Bible. The ancient asterpieces of poetry came to him in this period of his evelopment, to lead him gently by the hand onwards to the ry point where Goethe stood. He read the Greek tragedians wretched French translations, and with such aid laboriously anslated the *Iphigenia* of Euripides. Homer, in Voss's ithful version, became to him what Homer long was to oethe. And how thoroughly he threw himself into the cient world may be seen in his poem, *The Gods of Greece.*

[1] *Gervinus*, v. p. 152.

Like Goethe, he had found his religious opinions gradual separating him more and more from the orthodox Christian and, like Goethe, he had woven for himself a system out Spinoza, Kant, and the Grecian sages.

At this time, then, that these two men seemed most oppos to each other, and *were* opposed in feeling, they were gradual drawing closer and closer in the very lines of their develo ment, and a firm basis was prepared for solid and enduri union. Goethe was five-and-forty, Schiller five-and-thirt Goethe had much to give, which Schiller gratefully accepte and if he could not in return influence the developed mind his great friend, or add to the vast stores of its knowledge ar experience, he could give him that which was even more val able, *sympathy* and *impulse*. He excited Goethe to work. H withdrew him from the engrossing pursuit of science, ar restored him once more to poetry. He urged him to fini what was already commenced, and not to leave his works fragments. They worked together with the same purpo and with the same earnestness, and their union is the mo glorious episode in the lives of both, and remains as an etern exemplar of a noble friendship.

Of all the tributes to Schiller's greatness which an enthu astic people has pronounced, there is perhaps nothing whi carries a greater weight of tenderness and authority th Goethe's noble praise. It is a very curious fact that in t history of Shakspeare, that he is not known to have writt a single line in praise of any contemporary poet. The fashi of those days was for each poet to write verses in eulogy his friends; and the eulogies written by Shakspeare's frien are such as to satisfy even the idolatry of admirers in our da but there exists no eulogy, no single verse, from him who eulogy was more worth having than that of all the rest p together.[1] Had literary gossip, pregnant with literary mali produced the absurd impression that Shakspeare was co selfish, and self-idolatrous, this curious fact would have be made a damning proof. I have so often in these pages us Shakspeare as a contrast to Goethe, that it would be wro not to contrast him also on this point. Of all the failin

[1] There is, indeed, a couplet in the *Passionate Pilgrim* which names Spen with high praise; but it is doubtful whether the *Passionate Pilgrim* is anyth but the attempt of a bookseller to palm off on the public a work which Sh speare never wrote; and it is certain that Shakspeare is *not* the author of sonnet in which Spenser is mentioned, that sonnet having been previou published by a Richard Barnfield.

usually attributed to literary men, Goethe had the least of what could be called jealousy; of all the qualities which sit gracefully on greatness, he had the most of magnanimity. The stream of time will carry down to after ages the memory of several whose names will live only in his praise; and the future students of Literary History will have no fact to note of Goethe similar to that noted of Shakspeare: they will see how enthusiastic was his admiration of his rivals, Schiller, Voss, and Herder, and how quick he was to perceive the genius of Scott, Byron, Béranger, and Manzoni.

But I must quit this attempt to characterise the two rivals, and proceed to narrate their active co-operation in the common work.

While the great world was agitated to its depths by the rapid march of the Revolution, the little world of Weimar pursued the even tenor of its way, very much as if nothing concerning the destinies of mankind were then in action. Because Goethe is the greatest figure in Germany, the eyes of all Germans are turned towards him, anxious to see how he bore himself in those days. They see him—not moving with the current of ideas, not actively sympathising with events; and they find no better explanation of what they see than the brief formula that "he was an Egoist." If they look, however, at his companions and rivals, they will find a similar indifference. Wieland, the avowed enemy of all despotism, was frightened by the Reign of Terror into demanding a dictatorship. Nor—strange as it may appear—was Schiller, the poet of Freedom, the creator of Posa, more favourable to the French than Goethe himself. The Republic had honoured him in a singular way. It had forwarded him the diploma of citizenship; a dignity, conferred at the same time on Washington, Franklin, Tom Paine, Pestalozzi, Campe, and Anacharsis Cloots! The diploma signed by Danton and Roland, dated 6th September 1792, is now preserved in the Library at Weimar, where visitors will notice the characteristic accuracy of the French in the spelling of Schiller's name—*à Monsieur Schille, publiciste allemand.* This honour Schiller owed to his *Robbers*, or as his admirers called it, *Robert, chef de Brigands.* From the very first he had looked with no favourable eye on the Revolution, and the trial of Louis XVI. produced so deep an impression on him, that he commenced an address to the National Convention, which was however outrun by rapid events. Like Wieland, he saw no hope but in a dictatorship.

Such being the position of the leading minds, we are not t wonder if we find them pursuing their avocations just as nothing were going on in France or elsewhere. Weimar coul play no part in European politics. The men of Weimar ha their part to play in Literature, through which they saw possible regeneration. Believing in the potent efficacy culture, they devoted themselves with patriotism to that. glance at the condition of German Literature will show ho patriotism had noble work to do in such a cause.

The Leipsic Fair was a rival to our Minerva Press: Chival romances, Robber-stories and Spectre-romances, old Germa superstitions, Augustus Lafontaine's sentimental family-picture and Plays of the *Sturm und Drang* style, swarmed into th sacred places of Art, like another invasion of the Goths. O the stage Kotzebue was king. The *Stranger* was filling eve theatre, and moving the sensibilities of a too readily-move pit. Klopstock was becoming more and more oracular, le and less poetical. Jean Paul indeed gave signs of power an originality; but except Goethe and Schiller, Voss, who ha written his *Luise* and translated *Homer*, alone seemed likel to form the chief of a school of which the nation might b proud.

It was in this state of things that Schiller conceived th plan of a periodical—*Die Horen*,—memorable in many way to all students of German Literature. Goethe, Herder, Kan Fichte, the Humboldts, Klopstock, Jacobi, Engel, Meye Garve, Matthisson, and others, were to form a phalanx whos irresistible might should speedily give them possession of th land. "The more the narrow interests of the present," say Schiller, in the announcement of this work, "keep the mind of men on the stretch, and subjugate while they narrow, th more imperious is the need to free them through the high universal interest in that which is purely *human* and remove beyond the influences of time, and thus once more to re-uni the divided political world under the banner of Truth an Beauty."

Such was the undertaking which formed the first link in th friendship of Goethe and Schiller. How they stood toward each other has been seen in the seventh chapter of the pr ceding Book. One day, in May 1794, they met, coming fro a lecture given by Batsch at the Natural History Society Jena; in talking over the matter, Goethe, with pleased su prise, heard Schiller criticise the fragmentary Method whic

teachers of Science uniformly adopted. When they arrived at Schiller's house, Goethe went in with him, expounding the Theory of Metamorphoses with great warmth. Taking up a pen, he made a rapid sketch of the typical plant. Schiller listened with great attention, seizing each point clearly and rapidly, but shaking his head at last, and saying: "This is not an observation, it is an Idea." Goethe adds: "My surprise was painful, for these words clearly indicated the point which separated us. The opinions he had expressed in his essay on *Anmuth und Würde* recurred to me, and my old repulsion was nearly revived. But I mastered myself, and answered that I was delighted to find I had Ideas without knowing it, and to be able to contemplate them with my own eyes." There can be no question of Schiller having been in the right, though perhaps both he and Goethe assigned an exclusively subjective meaning to the phrase. The typical plant, Goethe knew very well, was not to be found in nature; but he thought it was *revealed* in plants.[1] Because he arrived at the belief in a type through direct observation and comparison, and not through *a priori* deduction; he maintained that this type was a perception (*Anschauung*), not an idea. Probably Schiller was more impressed with the metaphysical nature of the conception than with the physical evidence on which it had been formed. The chasm between them was indeed both broad and deep; and Goethe truly says: "It was in a conflict between the Object and the Subject, the greatest and most interminable of all conflicts, that began our friendship, which was eternal." A beginning had been made. Schiller's wife, for whom Goethe had a strong regard, managed to bring them together; and the proposed journal, *Die Horen*, brought their activities and sympathies into friendly union. Rapid was the growth of this friendship, and on both sides beneficial. Schiller paid a fortnight's visit at Weimar; Goethe was frequently in Jena. They found that they agreed not only on subjects, but also on the mode of looking at them. "It will cost me a long time to unravel all the ideas you have awakened in me," writes Schiller, "but I hope none will be lost."

Regretting that he could not give the novel *Wilhelm Meister* for the *Horen*, having already promised it to a publisher, Goethe nevertheless sends Schiller the manuscript from the

[1] Goethe, speaking of his labours in another department, says, "I endeavoured to find the Primitive Animal (Urthier), in other words, the Conception, the Idea of an Animal." *Werke*, xxxvi. p. 14.

third book onwards, and gratefully profits by the friendly criticism with which he reads it. He gave him, however, the two *Epistles*, the *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*, the *Roman Elegies*, and the essay on *Literary Sansculottism*.

The mention of *Wilhelm Meister* leads us to retrace our steps a few months, when the active interest he took in the direction of the Weimar Theatre, revived his interest in this novel, over which he had dawdled so many years. He finished it; but he finished it in quite a different spirit from that in which it was commenced, and I do not at all feel that Schiller's criticisms really were of advantage to it. But of this anon.

Towards the end of July he went to Dessau, and from thence to Dresden, where he strove with Meyer to forget the troubles of the time in contemplation of the treasures of Art. "All Germany," he writes to Fritz von Stein, "is divided into anxious, croaking, or indifferent men. For myself I find nothing better than to play the part of Diogenes, and roll my tub." He returned, and daily grew more and more intimate with Schiller. They began the friendly interchange of letters, which have since been published in six volumes, known to every student. In Goethe's letters to other friends at this time, 1795, is noticed an inward contentment, which he rightly attributes to this new influence. "It was a new spring to me," he says, "in which all seeds shot up, and gaily blossomed in my nature." Contact with Schiller's earnest mind and eager ambition, gave him the stimulus he so long had wanted. The ordinary spurs to an author's activity—the need of money or the need of fame—pricked him not. He had no need of money; of fame he had enough; and there was no nation to be appealed to. But Schiller's restless striving, and the emulation it excited, acted like magic upon him; and the years of their friendship were for both the most productive. In an unpublished letter from Frau von Stein to Charlotte von Lengefeld, dated 1795, there is this noticeable sentence: "I also feel that Goethe is drawing nearer to Schiller, for he has appeared to be now a little more aware of my existence. He seems to me like one who has been shipwrecked for some years on one of the South Sea Islands, and is now beginning to think of returning home." By the shipwreck is of course meant Christiane Vulpius; and by home, the salon of the Frau von Stein. It is possible, however, to reverse these positions.

On the 1st of November another son is born to Goethe. He bids Schiller to bring his contribution in the shape of a daughter, that the poetic family may be united and increased by a marriage. But this child only lives a few days. On the 20th, Schiller writes: "We have deeply grieved for your loss. You can console yourself with the thought that it has come so early, and thus more affects your *hopes* than your love." Goethe replies: "One knows not whether in such cases it is better to let sorrow take its natural course, or to repress it by the various aids which culture offers us. If one decides upon the latter method, *as I always do*, one is only strengthened for a moment; and I have observed that nature always asserts her right through some other crisis."

No other crisis seems to have come in this case. He was active in all directions. Göttling, in Jena, had just come forward with the discovery that phosphorus burns in nitrogen; and this drew Goethe's thoughts to Chemistry, which for a time was his recreation. Anatomy never lost its attraction: and through the snow on bitter mornings he was seen trudging to Loder's lectures, with a diligence young students might have envied. The Humboldts, especially Alexander, with whom he was in active correspondence, kept alive his scientific ardour; and it is to their energetic advice that we owe the essays on Comparative Anatomy. He was constantly talking to them on these subjects, eloquently expounding his ideas, which would probably never have been put to paper had they not urged him to it. True it is that he did not finish the essays; and only in 1820 did he print what he had written.[1] These conversations with the Humboldts embraced a wide field. "It is not perhaps presumptuous to suppose," he says, "that many ideas have thence, through *tradition*, become the common property of science, and have blossomed successfully, although the gardener who scattered the seeds is never named."

Poetical plans were numerous; some of them were carried into execution. A tragedy on the subject of "Prometheus Unbound" was begun, but never continued. The Hymn to Apollo was translated. *Alexis und Dora*, the *Vier Jahres Zeiten*, and several of the smaller poems, were written and

[1] This detail is important, as indeed every question of date must be in science. When the Essays were published, the principal ideas had already been brought before the world; when the Essays were written, the ideas were extraordinary novelties.

given to Schiller for the *Horen* or the *Musen Almanach;* not to mention translations from Madame de Stael, and the "Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini." But the product of this time which made the greatest sensation was the *Xenien.*

It has already been indicated that the state of German Literature was anything but brilliant, and that public taste was very low. The *Horen* was started to raise that degraded taste by an illustrious union of "All the Talents." It came—was seen—and made *no* conquest. Mediocrity in arms assailed it in numerous journals. Stupidity, against which, as Schiller says, "the gods themselves are powerless," was not in the least moved. The *Horen* was a double failure, for it failed to pay its expenses, and it failed to excite any great admiration in the few who purchased it. Articles by the poorest writers were attributed to the greatest. Even Frederick Schlegel attributed a story by Caroline von Wolzogen to Goethe. The public was puzzled—and somewhat *bored.* "All the Talents" have never yet succeeded in producing a successful periodical, and there are some good reasons for supposing that they never will. The *Horen* met with the fate of *The Liberal,* in which Byron, Shelley, Leigh Hunt, Moore, Hazlitt and Peacock were engaged. But the two great poets who had taken the greatest interest in it were not to be ignored with impunity. They resolved on a literary vengeance, and their vengeance was the *Xenien.*

A small library might be collected of the works called forth by these epigrams; but for the English reader the topic necessarily has but slender interest. He is not likely to exclaim with Boas: "On the 31st of October 1517, was commenced the Reformation of the Church in Germany; in October 1796, commenced the Reformation of Literature. As Luther published his Theses in Wittenberg, so Goethe and Schiller published their *Xenien.* No one before had the courage so to confront sacred Dulness, so to lash all Hypocrisy." One sees that some such castigation was needed, by the loud howling which was set up from all quarters; but that any important purification of Literature was thereby effected is not so clear.

The idea was Goethe's. It occurred to him while reading the *Xenia* of Martial; and having thrown off a dozen epigrams, he sent them to Schiller for the *Musen Almanach.* Schiller was delighted, but said there must be a hundred of them, chiefly directed against the journals which had attacked

the *Horen;* the hundred was soon thought too small a number, and it was resolved to have a thousand. They were written in the most thorough spirit of collaboration, the idea being sometimes given by one, and the form by another; one writing the first verse, and leaving the second to the other. There is no accurate separation of their epigrams, giving each to each, although critics have made an approximative selection; and Maltzahn has recently aided this by collation of the original manuscripts.

The sensation was tremendous. All the bad writers in the kingdom, and they were an army, felt themselves personally aggrieved. The pietists and sentimentalists were ridiculed; the pedants and pedagogues were lashed. So many persons and so many opinions were scarified, that no wonder if the public ear was startled at the shrieks of pain. Counterblasts were soon heard, and the *Xenien-Sturm* will remain as a curious episode of the war of the "many foolish heads against the two wise ones." "It is amusing," writes Goethe to Schiller, "to see what has really irritated these fellows, what they believe will irritate us, how empty and low is their conception of others, how they aim their arrows merely at the outworks, and how little they dream of the inaccessible citadel inhabited by men who are in earnest." The sensation produced by the *Dunciad* and by the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* was mild compared with the sensation produced by the *Xenien;* although the wit and sarcasm of the *Xenien* is as milk and water compared with the vitriol of the *Dunciad* and the *English Bards.*

Read by no stronger light than that which the appreciation of wit *as* wit throws on these epigrams, and not by the strong light of personal indignity, or personal malice, the *Xenien* will appear very weak productions, and the sensation they excited must appear somewhat absurd. But a similar disappointment meets the modern reader of the *Anti-Jacobin.* We know that its pages were the terror of enemies, the malicious joy of friends. We know that it was long held as a repertory of English wit, and the "Days of the *Anti-Jacobin*" are mentioned by Englishmen as the days of the *Xenien* are by Germans. Yet now that the *personal* spice is removed, we read both of them with a feeling of wonder at their enormous influence. In the *Xenien* there are a few epigrams which still titillate the palate, for they have the salt of wit in their lines. There are many also which have no pretension to wit, but are

admirable expressions of critical canons and philosophic ideas. If good taste could not be created by attacks on bad taste, there was at any rate some hope that such a castigation would make certain places sore; and in this sense the *Xenien* did good service.

The publication of *Wilhelm Meister* falls within this period, and we may now proceed to examine it as a work of art.

CHAPTER II

WILHELM MEISTER

A FRENCHMAN, an Englishman, and a German were commissioned, it is said, to give the world the benefit of their views on that interesting animal the Camel. Away went the Frenchman to the *Jardin des Plantes*, spent an hour there in rapid investigation, returned, and wrote a *feuilleton*, in which there was no phrase the Academy could blame, but also no phrase which added to the general knowledge. He was perfectly satisfied, however, and said, *Le voilà, le chameau!* The Englishman packed up his tea-caddy and a magazine of comforts; pitched his tent in the East; remained there two years studying the Camel in its habits; and returned with a thick volume of facts, arranged without order, expounded without philosophy, but serving as valuable materials for all who came after him. The German, despising the frivolity of the Frenchman, and the unphilosophic matter-of-factness of the Englishman, retired to his study, there *to construct the Idea of a Camel from out of the depths of his Moral Consciousness*. And he is still at it.

With this myth the reader is introduced into the very heart of that species of criticism which, flourishing in Germany, is also admired in some English circles, under the guise of Philosophical Criticism, and which has been exercised upon *Wilhelm Meister* almost as mercilessly as upon *Faust*.

My readers, it is hoped, will not generalise this remark so as to include within it all German critics and men of culture: such an extension of the remark would be almost as unfair in Germany as in England. There are many excellent critics in Germany, and excellent judges who are not critics; it would be too bad if our laughter at pedants and pretenders were to

extend to these. But no one acquainted with Germany and German literature can fail to recognise the wide-spread and pernicious influence of a mistaken application of Philosophy to Art: an application which becomes a tyranny on the part of real thinkers, and a hideous absurdity on the part of those who merely echo the jargon of the schools. It is this criticism which has stifled Art in Germany, and ruined many a young artist who showed promise. It is a fundamental mistake to translate Art into the formulas of Philosophy, and then christen the translation the Philosophy of Art. The critic is never easy until he has shifted his ground. He is not content with the work as it presents itself. He endeavours to get *behind* it, beneath it, into the depths of the soul which produced it. He is not satisfied with what the artist has *given*, he wants to know what he *meant*. He guesses at the meaning; the more remote the meaning lies on the wandering tracks of thought, the better pleased is he with the discovery; and he sturdily rejects every simple explanation in favour of this exegetical Idea. Thus the phantom of Philosophy hovers mistily before Art, concealing Art from our eyes. It is true the Idea said to underlie the work was never conceived by any one before, least of all by the Artist; but *that* is the glory of the critic: he is proud of having plunged into the depths. Of all horrors to the German of this school there is no horror like that of the surface—it is more terrible to him than cold water.

Wilhelm Meister has been the occasion of so many ideas constructed out of the depths of moral consciousness, it has been made to *mean* such wondrous (and contradictory) things, that its author must have been astonished at his unsuspecting depth. There is some obvious symbolism in the latter part, which I have little doubt was introduced to flatter the German tendency; as I have no sort of doubt that its introduction has spoiled a masterpiece. The obvious want of unity in the work has given free play to the interpreting imagination of critics. Hildebrand boldly says that the "Idea of *Wilhelm Meister* is precisely this—that it has no Idea,"—which does not greatly further our comprehension.

Instead of trying to discover the Idea, let us stand fast by historical criticism, and see what light may be derived from a consideration of the origin and progress of the work, which, from first to last, occupied him during twenty years. The first six books—beyond all comparison the best and most im-

portant—were written before the journey to Italy: they were written during the active theatrical period when Goethe was manager, poet, and actor. The contents of these books point very clearly to his intention of representing in them the whole nature, aims, and art of the comedian; and in a letter to Merck he expressly states that it is his intention to portray the actor's life. Whether at the same time he meant the actor's life to be symbolical, cannot be positively determined. That may, or may not, have been a *secondary* intention. The primary intention is very clear. Nor had he, at this time, yielded to the seduction of attempting the symbolical in Art. He sang as the bird sings; his delight was in healthy objective fact; he had not yet donned the robes of an Egyptian priest, or learned to speak in hieroglyphs. He was seriously interested in acting, and the actor's art. He thought the life of a player a good framework for certain pictures, and he chose it. Afterwards, the idea of making these pictures symbolical certainly did occur to him, and he concluded the romance upon this after-thought.

Gervinus emphatically records his disbelief of the opinion that Goethe originally intended to make Wilhelm *unfit* for success as an actor; and I think a careful perusal of the novel, even in its present state, will convince the reader that Gervinus is right. Instead of Wilhelm's career being represented as the development of a false tendency—the obstinate cultivation of an imperfect talent, such as was displayed in Goethe's own case with respect to plastic Art—one sees, in spite of some subsequent additions thrown in to modify the work according to an after-thought, that Wilhelm has a true inborn tendency, a talent which ripens through practice. With the performance of *Hamlet* the apogee is reached; and here ends the first plan. Having written so far, Goethe went to Italy. We have seen the changes which came over his views. After a lapse of ten years he resumes the novel; and having in that period lived through the experience of a false tendency—having seen the vanity of cultivating an imperfect talent—he *alters* the plan of his novel, makes it symbolical of the erroneous striving of youth towards culture; invents the cumbrous machinery of a Mysterious Family, whose watchful love has guided all his steps, and who have encouraged him in error that they might lead him through error unto truth. This is what in his old age he declared—in the *Tag und Jahres Hefte*, and in his letters to Schiller—to have been the plan upon

which it was composed. "It sprang," he says, "from a dim feeling of the great truth that Man often seeks that which Nature has rendered impossible to him. All dilettantism and false tendency is of this kind. Yet it is possible that every false step should lead to an inestimable good, and some intimation of this is given in *Meister*." To Eckermann he said: "The work is one of the most incalculable productions; I *myself can scarcely be said to have the key to it.* People seek a central point, and that is difficult to find; nor is it even right. I should think a *rich manifold life brought close to our eyes would be enough in itself without any express tendency*, which, after all, is only for the intellect." This is piercing to the very kernel. The origin of the symbolical matter, however, lies in the demands of the German intellect for such food. "But," he continues, "if anything of the kind is insisted upon, it will, perhaps, be found in the words which Frederic at the end addresses to the hero, when he says: 'Thou seem'st to me like Saul, the son of Kish, who went out to seek his father's asses, and found a kingdom.' Keep only to this; for, in fact, the whole work seems to say nothing more than that man, despite all his follies and errors, being led by a higher hand, reaches some happy goal at last."

Schiller, who knew only the *second* plan, objected, and with justice, to the disproportionate space allotted to the players. "It looks occasionally," he wrote, "as if you were writing *for* players, whereas your purpose is only to write *of* them. The care you bestow on certain little details of this subject and individual excellencies of the art, which although important to the player and manager, are not so to the public, give to your representation the false appearance of a particular design; and even one who does not infer such a design, might accuse you of being too much under the influence of a private preference for these subjects." If we accept the later plan, we must point out the inartistic composition, which allows five books of Introduction, one of disconnected Episode, and only two of Development. This is against all proportion. Yet Frederick Schlegel expressly says that the two last books are properly speaking the whole work; the others are but preparations.[1]

The purpose, or rather purposes, of *Wilhelm Meister* seem first, the rehabilitation of Dramatic Art; and secondly, the

[1] *Charakteristiken und Kritiken*, p. 168. Schlegel's review is well worth reading as an example of ingenious criticism, and praise artfully presented under the guise of analysis.

theory of Education. The last two books are full of Educa tion. Very wise and profound thoughts are expressed, and these thoughts redeem the triviality of the machinery. But otherwise these books are lamentably inferior to the first six books in style, in character, in interest. On the whole, *Wilhelm Meister* is, indeed, "an incalculable work." Several readings have intensified my admiration (which at first was tepid), and intensified also my sense of its defects. The beauties are ever new, ever wonderful; the faults press themselves upon notice more sharply than they did at first.

The story opens with great dramatic vivacity. Mariana and old Barbara stand before us, sketched with Shakspearian sharpness of outline and truth of detail. The whole episode is admirable, if we except the lengthy narrative in which Wilhelm details his early passion for the Marionnettes, which has probably made some readers as drowsy as it made Mariana. There is something painfully trivial in his long narrative; apart from its artistic error as a digression. The contrast between Wilhelm and the prosaic Werner is felicitously touched. But the happiest traits are those which show Wilhelm's want of decision, and incapacity of finishing the work he has begun; traits which indicate his peculiar temperament. Indeed throughout the novel Wilhelm is not the hero, but a creature of the incidents. He is a mere nose-of-wax. And this is artfully designed. Egmont and Goetz are heroes: living in stormy times, they remain altogether uninfluenced by the times. The poet represents noble characters, and he represents them in their strong, clear individuality, superior to circumstance. With Wilhelm, he shows how some characters change, obedient to every external influence. The metamorphoses of Wilhelm would have been impossible with a character such as Egmont. This seems so obvious, that one is surprised to find critics objecting to the vacillating character of Wilhelm as if it were a fault in art. It would be as reasonable to object to the vacillations of Hamlet. Wilhelm is not only led with ease from one thing to another, but is always oscillating in his views of himself. Even his emotions are not persistent. He passes from love of the passionate Mariana to an inclination for the coquettish Philina; from Philina to the Countess, whom he immediately forgets for the Amazon; he is about to marry Theresa, but relinquishes her as soon as he is accepted, and offers himself to Natalie.

There is in this novel, evidence of sufficient humour to have

made a decidedly humorous writer, had that faculty not been kept in abeyance by other faculties. Wilhelm's unconscious pedantry, and his predominant desire to see the drama illustrated in ordinary life, and to arrange life into a theatre;[1] the Count and his eccentricities; the adventures of the players in the castle where they arrive, and find all the urgent necessaries wanting; the costume in which Wilhelm decks himself; the whole character of Philina and that of Frederic—are instances of this humorous power.

To tell the story of this novel would be too great an injustice to it; the reader has, therefore, it must be presupposed, already some acquaintance with it; in default thereof, let him at once make its acquaintance.[2] The narrative being presupposed as known, my task is easy. I have only to refer to the marvellous art with which the characters unfold themselves. We see them, and see through them. They are never described, they exhibit themselves. Philina, for example, one of the most bewitching and original creations in fiction, whom we know as well as if she had flirted with us and jilted us, is never once described. Even her person is made present to us through the impression it makes on others, not by any direct information. We are not told that she was a strange mixture of carelessness, generosity, caprice, wilfulness, affectionateness, and gaiety; a lively girl, of French disposition, with the smallest possible regard for decorum, but with a true decorum of her own; snapping her fingers at the world, disliking conventions, tediousness and pedantry; without any ideal aspirations, yet also without any affectations; coquetting with all the men, disliked by all the women, turning every one round her finger, yet ready to oblige and befriend even those who had injured her: we are not told this; but as such she lives before us. She is so genuine, and so charming a sinner, that we forgive all her trespasses. On the whole, she is the most original and most difficult creation in the book. Mignon, the great poetical creation, was perhaps less difficult to draw, when once conceived. All the other characters serve as contrasts to Philina. She moves among them and throws them into relief, as they do her. The sentimental sickly Aurelia, and the sentimental Madame Melina, have an earnestness Philina does not comprehend; but they have the faults of their qualities, and

[1] See especially Book I., cap. 15, for his idea of the private life of players, as if they carried *off* the stage something of their parts *on* the stage.

[2] It has been translated by Carlyle.

she has neither. She has no more sense of earnestness than a bird. With bird-like gaiety and bird-like enjoyment of existence, she chirrups through sunshine and rain. One never thinks of demanding morality from her. Morality? she knows it not, nay, has not even a bowing acquaintance with it. Nor can she be called immoral. Contrasting her with Mignon, we see her in contrast with Innocence, Earnestness, Devotion and vague yearnings for a distant home; for Philina was never innocent, she is as quick and clever as a kitten; she cannot be serious: if she does not laugh she must yawn or cry; devoted she cannot be, although affectionate; and for a distant home, how can that trouble one who knows how to nestle everywhere? It is possible to say very hard words of Philina but, like many a naughty child, she disarms severity by her grace.

Of Mignon, and her songs, I need say nothing. Painters have tried to give an image of that strange creation which lures the imagination and the heart of every reader; but she defies the power of the pencil. The old Harper is a wild weird figure, bearing a mystery about with him, which his story at the close finely clears up. He not only adds to the variety of the figures in the novel, but by his unforgettable songs gives a depth of passion and suffering to the work which would otherwise move too exclusively in familiar regions. These two poetic figures, rising from the prosaic background, suggest an outlying world of beauty; they have the effect of a rainbow in the London streets. Serlo, Laertes, the selfish Melina, and his sentimental wife, are less devoloped characters yet drawn with a masterly skill.

But when we quit their company—that is, when we quit the parts which were written before the journey to Italy, and before the plan was altered—we arrive at characters such as Lothario, the Abbé, the Doctor, Teresa, and Natalie, and feel that a totally new style is present. We have quitted the fresh air of Nature, and entered the philosopher's study; life is displaced by abstractions. Not only does the interest of the story seriously fall off, but the handling of the characters is entirely changed. The characters are described; they do not live. The incidents are crowded, have little vraisemblance and less interest. The diction has become weak—sometimes positively bad. As the men and women are without passion so is the style without colour. Schiller, writing of the first book, says: "The bold poetic passages, which flash up from

the calm current of the whole, have an excellent effect; they elevate and fill the soul." But the style of the last two Books, with the exception of the exquisite Harper's story, is such that in England the novel is almost universally pronounced tedious, in spite of the wonderful truth and variety of character, and the beauty of so many parts. In these later Books the narrative is slow, and carries incidents trivial and improbable. The Mysterious Family in the Tower is an absurd mystification; without the redeeming interest which Mrs. Radcliffe would have thrown into it. With respect to the style, it is enough to open at random, and you are tolerably certain to alight upon a passage which it is difficult to conceive how an artist could have allowed it to pass. The iteration of certain set forms of phrase, and the abstractness of the diction, are very noticeable. Here is a sentence! "Sie können aber hieraus die unglaubliche Toleranz jener Männer sehen, dass sie eben auch mich auf meinem *Wege* gerade *deswegen*, weil es mein *Weg* ist, keines*wegs* stören."

One great peculiarity in this work is that which probably made Novalis call it "artistic Atheism."[1] Such a phrase is easily uttered, sounds well, is open to many interpretations, and is therefore sure to find echoes. I take it to mean that in *Wilhelm Meister* there is a complete absence of all *moral verdict* on the part of the author. Characters tread the stage, events pass before our eyes, things are done and thoughts are expressed; but no word comes from the author respecting the moral bearing of these things. Life forgets in activity all moral verdict. The good is beneficent, but no one praises it; the bad works evil, but no one anathematises it. It is a world in which we see no trace of the preacher, not a glimpse even of his surplice. To many readers this absence is like the absence of salt at dinner. They feel towards such simple objective delineation something of the repugnance felt in Evangelical circles to Miss Edgeworth's Tales. It puts them out. Robert Hall confessed that reading Miss Edgeworth hindered him for a week in his clerical functions; he was completely disturbed by her pictures of a world of happy active people *without* any visible interference of religion—a sensible,

[1] "Das Buch handelt bloss von gewöhnlichen Dingen, die Natur und der Mysticismus sind ganz vergessen. Es ist eine poetisirte bürgerliche und häusliche Geschichte; das Wunderbare darin wird ausdrücklich als Poesie und Schwärmerei behandelt. Künstlerischer Atheismus ist der Geist des Buchs." *Schriften*, ii. p. 367.

and on the whole, healthy world, yet without warnings, without exhortations, without any apparent terrors concerning the state of souls.

Much has been said about the immorality of *Wilhelm Meister*, which need not be repeated here. Schiller hits the mark in his reply to what Jacobi said on this point: "The criticism of Jacobi has not at all surprised me; for it is as inevitable that an individual like him should be offended by the unsparing truth of your pictures, as it is that a mind like yours should give him cause to be so. Jacobi is one of those who seek only their own ideas in the representation of poets, and prize more what *should be* than *what is;* the contest therefore begins in first principles. So soon as a man lets me see that there is anything in poetical representations that interests him more than internal necessity and truth, I give him up. If he could show you that the immorality of your pictures does not proceed from the nature of the subject but from the manner in which you treat it, then indeed would you be accountable, not because you had sinned against moral laws, but against critical laws."

Wilhelm Meister is not a moral story, that is to say not a story written with the express purpose of illustrating some obvious maxim. The consequence is that it is frequently pronounced immoral; which I conceive to be an absurd judgment; for if it have no express moral purpose, guiding and animating all the scenes, neither has it an immoral purpose. It may not be written for the edification of virtue; assuredly it is not written for the propagation of vice. If its author is nowhere a preacher, he cannot by his sternest critics be called a pander. All that can be said is that the Artist has been content to paint scenes of life, *without comment;* and that some of these scenes belong to an extensive class of subjects, familiar indeed to the experience of all but children, yet by general consent not much talked of in society. If any reader can be morally injured by reading such scenes in this novel rather than in the newspaper, his moral constitution is so alarmingly delicate, and so susceptible of injury, that he is truly pitiable. Let us hope the world is peopled with robuster natures; a robuster nature need not be alarmed.

But while asserting *Wilhelm Meister* to be in no respect a Moral Tale, I am bound to declare that deep and healthy moral meaning lies in it, pulses through it, speaking in many tones to him who hath ears to hear it. As Wordsworth says

of *Tam O'Shanter*, "I pity him who cannot perceive that in all this, though there was no moral purpose, there is a moral effect." What each reader will see in it, will depend on his insight and experience. Sometimes this meaning results from the whole course of the narrative; such for example as the influence of life upon Wilhelm in moulding and modifying his character, raising it from mere impulse to the subordination of reason, from dreaming self-indulgence to practical duty, from self-culture to sympathy; but the way this lesson is taught is the artist's not the preacher's way, and therefore may be missed by those who wait for the moral to be pointed before they are awake to its significance.

The "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul," which occupy the Sixth Book, have, in some circles, embalmed what was pronounced the corruption of the other books. Stolberg burned all the rest of the work, and kept these chapters as a treasure. Curious indeed is the picture presented of a quiet mystic, who is at the same time an original and strongly marked character; and the effect of religious convictions on life is subtly delineated in the gradual encroachment and final predominance of mysticism on the mind of one who seemed every way so well fitted for the world. Nevertheless, while duly appreciating the picture, I regret that it was not published separately, for it interrupts the story in a most inartistic manner, and has really nothing to do with the rest of the work.

The criticism on *Hamlet*, which Wilhelm makes, still remains the best criticism we have on that wonderful play. Very artfully is *Hamlet* made as it were a part of the novel; and Rosenkrantz praises its introduction not only because it illustrates the affinity between Hamlet and Wilhelm, both of whom are reflective, vacillating characters, but because Hamlet is further allied to Wilhelm in making the Play a touchstone, whereby to detect the truth, and determine his own actions.

Were space at disposal, the whole of Schiller's criticism on this work might fitly be given here from his enthusiastic letters; but I must content myself with one extract, which is quite delightful to read: "I account it the most fortunate incident in my existence, that I have lived to see the completion of this work; that it has taken place while my faculties are still capable of improvement; that I can yet draw from this pure spring; and the beautiful relation there is between us makes it a kind of religion with me to feel towards what is yours as if it were my own, and so to purify and elevate my

nature that my mind may be a clear mirror, and that I may thus deserve, in a higher sense, the name of your friend. How strongly have I felt on this occasion that the Excellent is a power; that by selfish natures it can be felt only as a power, and that only where there is disinterested love can it be enjoyed. I cannot describe to you how deeply the truth, the beautiful vitality, the simple fulness of this work has affected me. The excitement into which it has thrown my mind will subside when I shall have perfectly mastered it, and that will be an important crisis in my being. This excitement is the effect of the beautiful, and only the beautiful, and proceeds from the fact that my intellect is not yet entirely in accordance with my feelings. I understand now perfectly what you mean when you say that it is strictly the beautiful, the true, that can move you even to tears. Tranquil and deep, clear, and yet like Nature, unintelligible, is this work; and all, even the most trivial collateral incident, shows the clearness, the equanimity of the mind whence it flowed."

CHAPTER III

THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL

"After the mad challenge of the *Xenien*," writes Goethe to Schiller, "we must busy ourselves only with great and worthy works of Art, and shame our opponents by the manifestation of our poetical natures in forms of the Good and Noble." This trumpet-sound found Schiller alert. The two earnest men went earnestly to work, and produced their matchless ballads, and their great poems, *Hermann und Dorothea* and *Wallenstein*. The influence of these men on each other was very peculiar. It made Goethe, in contradiction to his native tendency, speculative and theoretical. It made Schiller, in contradiction to his native tendency, realistic. Had it not urged Goethe to rapid production, we might have called the influence wholly noxious; but seeing what was produced, we pause ere we condemn. "You have created a new youth for me," writes Goethe, "and once more restored me to Poetry which I had almost entirely given up." They were both much troubled with Philosophy at this epoch. Kant and Spinoza occupied Schiller; Kant and scientific theories occupied

Goethe. They were both, moreover, becoming more and more imbued with the spirit of ancient Art, and were bent on restoring its principles. They were men of genius, and therefore these two false tendencies—the tendency to Reflection, and the tendency to Imitation—were less hurtful to *their* works than to the national culture. Their genius saved them, in spite of their errors; but their errors misled the nation. It is remarked by Gervinus, that "Philosophy was restored in the year 1781, and profoundly affected all Germany. Let any one draw up a statistical table of our literary productions, and he will be amazed at the decadence of Poetry during the last fifty years in which Philosophy has been supreme." Philosophy has distorted Poetry, and been the curse of Criticism. It has vitiated German Literature; and it produced, in combination with the tendency to Imitation, that brilliant error known as the Romantic School.

A few words on this much talked-of school may not be unacceptable. Like its offspring, *L'École Romantique* in France, it had a critical purpose which was good, and a retrograde purpose which was bad. Both were insurgent against narrow critical canons; both proclaimed the superiority of Mediæval Art; both sought, in Catholicism and in national Legends, meanings profounder than those current in the literature of the day. The desire to get deeper than Life itself led to a disdain of reality and the present. Hence the selection of the Middle Ages and the East as regions for the ideal: they were not present, and they were not classical; the classical had already been tried, and against it the young Romantic School was everywhere in arms. In other respects the German and French schools greatly differed. The Schlegels, Tieck, Novalis, and Werner, had no enemy to combat in the shape of a severe National Taste, such as opposed the tentatives of Victor Hugo, Dumas, and Alfred de Vigny. On the contrary, they were supported by a large body of the nation, for their theories only carried further certain tendencies which had become general. Thus in as far as these theories were critical, they were little more than jubilations over the victorious campaigns won by Lessing, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller. The Schlegels stood upon the battlefield, now silent, and sang a hymn of victory over the bodies of the slain. Frederick Schlegel, by many degrees the most considerable critic of this school, began his career with an Anthology from Lessing's works: *Lessing's Geist: eine Blumenlese seiner Ansichten;* he ended

it with admiration for Philip the Second and the cruel Alva, and with the proclamation that Calderon was a greater poet than Shakspeare. Frederick Schlegel thus represents the whole Romantic School from its origin to its close.

Fichte, Schelling, Schleiermacher, and Solger are the philosophers of this school; from the two former came the most famous, now almost forgotten, principle of "Irony," which Hegel[1] not only disposed of as a principle, but showed that the critics themselves made no use of it. No one, not even Tieck, attempted to exhibit the "irony" of Shakspeare, the god of their idolatry. Among the services rendered by Tieck and A. W. Schlegel, the translation of Shakspeare must never be forgotten, for although that translation is by no means so accurate as is generally believed, being often singularly weak, and sometimes grossly mistaken in its interpretation of the meaning, it is nevertheless a translation which, on the whole, has, perhaps, no rival in literature, and has served to make Shakspeare as familiar to the Germans as to us.

In their crusade against the French, in their naturalisation of Shakspeare, and their furtherance of Herder's efforts towards the restoration of a Ballad Literature and the taste for Gothic Architecture, these Romanticists were with the stream. They also flattered the national tendencies when they proclaimed "Mythology and Poetry, symbolical Legend and Art to be one and indivisible,"[2] whereby it became clear that a new Religion, or at any rate a new Mythology, was needed, for "the deepest want and deficiency of all modern Art lies in the fact that the artists have no Mythology."[3]

While Fichte, Schelling, and Schleiermacher were tormented with the desire to create a new philosophy and a new religion, it soon became evident that a Mythology was not to be created by programme; and as a Mythology was indispensable, the Romanticists betook themselves to Catholicism, with its saintly Legends and saintly Heroes; some of them, as Tieck and A. W. Schlegel, out of nothing more than poetic enthusiasm and dilettantism; others, as F. Schlegel and Werner, with thorough conviction, accepting Catholicism and all its consequences.

Solger had called Irony the daughter of Mysticism; and how highly these Romanticists prized Mysticism is known to all readers of Novalis. To be mystical was to be poetical as

[1] *Æsthetik*, i. pp. 84–90.
[2] F. SCHLEGEL: *Gespräche über Poesie*, p. 263.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 274.

well as profound; and critics glorified mediæval monstrosities because of the deep spiritualism which stood in contrast with the pagan materialism of Goethe and Schiller. Once commenced, this movement carried what was true in it rapidly onwards to the confines of nonsense. Art became the handmaid of religion. The canon was laid down that only in the service of Religion had Art ever flourished,—only in that service *could* it flourish: a truth from which strange conclusions were drawn. Art became a propaganda. Fra Angelico and Calderon suddenly became idols. Werner was proclaimed a Colossus, by Wackenroder, who wrote his *Herzensergiessungen eines Kunstliebenden Klosterbruders*, with Tieck's aid, to prove, said Goethe, that because some monks were artists, all artists should turn monks. Then it was that men looked to Faith for miracles in Art. Devout study of the Bible was thought to be the readiest means of rivalling Fra Angelico and Van Eyck; inspiration was sought in a hair-shirt. Catholicism had a Mythology, and painters went over in crowds to the Roman Church. Cornelius and Overbeck lent real genius to the attempt to revive the dead forms of early Christian Art, as Goethe and Schiller did to revive the dead forms of Grecian Art. Overbeck, who painted in a cloister, was so thoroughly penetrated by the ascetic spirit, that he refused to draw from the living model, lest it should make his works too *naturalistic;* for to be true to Nature was tantamount to being false to the higher tendencies of Spiritualism. Some had too much of the artistic instinct to carry their principles into these exaggerations; but others less gifted, and more bigoted, carried the principles into every excess. A band of these reformers established themselves in Rome, and astonished the Catholics quite as much as the Protestants. Cesar Masini in his work *Dei Puristi in Pittura* thus describes them: "Several young men came to Rome from Northern Germany in 1809. They abjured Protestantism, adopted the costume of the Middle Ages, and began to preach the doctrine that painting had died out with Giotto, and to revive it, a recurrence to the old style was necessary. Under such a mask of piety they concealed their nullity. Servile admirers of the rudest periods in Art, they declared the pigmies were giants, and wanted to bring us back to the dry hard style and barbarous imperfection of a Buffalmacco, Calandrino, Paolo Uccello, when we had a Raphael, a Titian, and a Correggio." In spite of their exaggerated admiration of the Trecentisti, in spite of a doctrine

which was fundamentally vicious, the Romanticists made a decided revolution, not only in Literature but in Painting, and above all in our general estimate of painters. If we now learn to look at the exquisite works of Fra Angelico, Ghirlandajo and Massaccio with intense pleasure; and can even so far divest ourselves of the small prejudices of criticism, as to be deeply interested in Giotto, Gozzoli, or Guido da Arezzo feeling in them the divine artistic faculty which had not yet mastered artistic expression; it is to the preaching of the Romanticists that we owe this source of noble enjoyment. In poetry the Romanticists were failures, but in painting they achieved marked success. Whatever may be thought of the German School, it must be confessed that before Overbeck, Cornelius, Schadow, Hess, Lessing, Hübner, Sohn, and Kaulbach, the Germans had no painters at all; and they have in these men painters of very remarkable power.

To return to Goethe. He was led by Schiller into endless theoretical discussions. They philosophised on the limits of epic and dramatic poetry; read and discussed Aristotle's Poetics; discussions which resulted in Goethe's essay, *Ueber epische und dramatische Poesie;* and, as we gather from their correspondence, scarcely ventured to take a step until they had seen how Theory justified it. Goethe read with enthusiasm Wolf's *Prolegomena* to Homer, and at once espoused its principles.[1] The train of thought thus excited, led him from the origin of epic songs to the origin of the Hebrew songs, and Eichhorn's *Introduction to the Old Testament* led him to attempt a new explanation of the wanderings of the people of Israel which he subsequently inserted in the notes to the *Westöstlich Divan.*

Nor was he only busy with epical theories; he also gave himself to the production of epics. *Hermann und Dorothea* the most perfect of his poems, was written at this time. *Achilleis* was planned and partly executed; *Die Jagd* was also planned, but left unwritten, and subsequently became the prose tale known as *die Novelle.* This year of 1797 is more over memorable as the year of ballads, in which he and Schiller, in friendly rivalry, gave Germany lyrical masterpieces. His share may be estimated, when we learn that in this year

[1] Later on in life he returned to the old conviction of the unity of Homer. It is to be regretted that in England Wolf's masterly work is seldom read, the critics contenting themselves with second-hand statements of his views, which fail to do them justice.

were written the *Bride of Corinth*, the *Zauberlehrling*, *der Gott und die Bajadere*, and the *Schatzgräber*. In an unpublished letter to Körner, he writes, "You will have learned from Schiller that we are now making attempts in the ballad line. His are, as you know already, very felicitous. I wish that mine may be in some sort worthy to stand beside them; he is, in every sense, more competent to this species of poetry than I am."

In the same year *Faust* was once more taken up. The *Dedication*, the *Prologue in Heaven* and the Intermezzo of *Oberon and Titania's Marriage* were written. But while he was in this mood, Hirt came to Weimar, and in the lively reminiscences of Italy, and the eager discussions of Art which his arrival awakened, all the northern phantoms were exorcised by southern magic. He gave up *Faust*, and wrote an essay on the *Laokoon*. He began once more to pine for Italy. This is characteristic of his insatiable hunger for knowledge; he never seemed to have mastered *material* enough. Whereas Schiller, so much poorer in material, and so much more inclined to production, thought this Italian journey would only embarrass him with fresh objects; and urged Meyer to dissuade him from it. He did not go; and I think Schiller's opinion was correct: at the point now reached he had nothing to do but to give a form to the materials he had accumulated.

In the July of this year he, for the third time, made a journey into Switzerland. In Frankfurt he introduced Christiane and her boy to his Mother, who received them very heartily, and made the few days' stay there very agreeable. It is unnecessary for us to follow him on his journey, which is biographically interesting only in respect to the plan of an epic on *William Tell* which he conceived, and for which he studied the localities. The plan was never executed. He handed it over to Schiller for his drama on that subject, giving him at the same time the idea of the character of Tell, and the studies of localities, which Schiller managed to employ with a mastery quite astonishing to his friend. The same brotherly co-operation is seen in the composition of *Wallenstein*. It is not true, as was currently supposed in Germany, that Goethe wrote any portions of that work. He has told us himself he only wrote two unimportant lines. But his counsel aided Schiller through every scene; and the bringing it on the stage was to him like a triumph of his own.

In the spring of 1798 Schelling's Philosophy of Nature, and

his own plans for a History of the Theory of Colours, lured him from poetry; but Schiller again brought him back to it. *Faust* was resumed, and the last tragic scenes of the First Part were written. In the summer he was much at Jena with Schiller, consequently with poetry. Achilles and Tell, the ancient and the modern world, as Schäfer remarks, struggled for priority, but neither obtained it, because he was still perplexed in his epic theories. The studies of the *Iliad* had "hunted him through the circle of enthusiasm, hope, insight and despair." No sooner did he leave Jena than, as he confessed, he was drawn by another polarity. Accordingly, we see him busy with an art-journal, the *Propyläen*. He was also busy with the alteration of the Theatre, the boards of which on the 12th of October, 1798, were made for ever memorable by the production of *Wallenstein's Camp* and *Prologue*. On the 30th January, 1799, the birthday of the Duchess Louise, the *Piccolomini* was produced; and, on the 20th of April, *Wallenstein's Tod*.

It was in this year that a young advocate, in Edinburgh, put forth a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen*, and preluded to a fame as great as Goethe's own; and it was in the December of this year that Karl August's generosity enabled Schiller to quit Jena, and come to Weimar for the rest of his life, there in uninterrupted intercourse with Goethe to pursue the plans so dear to both, especially in the formation of a national stage. I will take advantage of this change to insert a chapter on *Hermann und Dorothea*, which was published in 1796–97; and I will afterwards group together the scattered details of the theatrical management, so as to place them before the reader in a continuous narrative.

CHAPTER IV

HERMANN UND DOROTHEA

THE pleasure every one finds in making acquaintance with the original stories from which Shakspeare created his marvellous plays, is the pleasure of detecting how genius can improve upon the merest hint, and how with its own vital forces it converts lifeless material into immortal life. This pleasure also carries the conviction that there is no lack of subjects for an artist, if he have but the eye to see them. It shows us

that great poets are not accustomed to cast about for subjects worthy of treatment; on the contrary, the merest hint is enough to form the nucleus of a splendid work; a random phrase will kindle a magnificent conception.

Very like the material offered by Bandello to Shakspeare is the material offered to Goethe by the old narrative[1] from which he created one of the most faultless of modern poems. Herein we learn how a rich and important citizen of Altmühl has in vain tried to persuade his son to marry. The Saltzburg emigrants pass through the town, and among them the son finds "a maiden who pleases him right well;" he inquires after her family and bringing up, and as all he hears is satisfactory, away he hies to his father, declaring that unless this Saltzburg maiden be given him, he will remain unmarried all his life. The father, aided by the pastor, tries to persuade him from such a resolution. But their efforts being vain, the pastor advises the father to give his consent, which is done. Away goes the son to the maiden, and asks her if she is willing to enter his father's domestic service. She accepts, and is presented to the father. But he, ignorant of his son's *ruse*, and believing he sees before him the betrothed, asks her whether she is fond of his son. The maiden thinks they are laughing at her, but on learning that they are serious in wishing her to belong to the family, declares herself quite ready, and draws from her bosom a purse containing 200 ducats, which she hands to her bridegroom as her dowry.

This is the story out of which grew *Hermann und Dorothea*. An ordinary story, in which the poet alone could see a poem; *what* he has seen, every reader of German literature well knows; and those to whom the poem is unknown must be content with the following analysis.

The epoch is changed to that of the French Revolution. The emigrants are driven from home by political events. The scene is on the right side of the Rhine. The streets of a quiet little village are noisy with unaccustomed movement; every one is crowding to see the sad procession of emigrants passing through, in the heat and dust of a summer afternoon. Mine Host of the Golden Lion, sitting at his doorway, marvels at such curiosity, but applauds the active benevolence of his

[1] *Das Liebthätige Gera gegen die Salzburgischen Emigranten. Das ist: Kurze und wahrhaftige Erzählung wie dieselben in der Gräflich Reuss Plauischen Residenz Stadt angekommen, aufgenommen, und versorget, auch was an und von vielen derselben Gutes gesehen und gehöret worden.* Leipsic: 1732.

wife, who has sent their son with linen, food and drink, to bestow upon the sufferers, "for to give is the duty of those who have."

And now are seen returning some of the curious. See how dusty their shoes, and how their faces are burning! They come back wiping the perspiration from their glowing faces; the old couple rejoice at having sat quiet at home, contenting themselves with what will be told them of the sight. Sure enough, here comes the pastor, and with him the apothecary; seating themselves on the wooden bench, they shake the dust off their shoes, and fan their hot faces with their handkerchiefs. They narrate what they have seen; and mine host, sighing, hopes his son will overtake the emigrants, and give them what has been sent. But the heat suggests to him that they should retire into the cool back parlour, and, out of the way of the flies, refresh themselves with a bottle of Rhine wine. There, over the wine, mine host expresses his wish to see his son married. This is the whole of the first canto; and yet, slight as the material is, the wonderful objective treatment gives it substance. The fresh air of the country breathes from the verse.

In the second canto Hermann appears before his father and friends. The pastor's quick eye detects that he is returned an altered man. Hermann narrates how he accomplished his mission. Overtaking the emigrants, he fell in with a cart drawn by oxen, wherein lay a poor woman beside the infant to which she had just given birth. Leading the oxen was a maiden, who came towards him with the calm confidence of a generous soul, and begged his aid for the poor woman whom she had just assisted in her travail. Touched with pity, and feeling at once that this maiden was the best person to distribute justly the aid he had brought, Hermann gave it all into her hands. They parted, she gratefully pursuing her sad journey, he thoughtfully returning home. Love has leaped into his heart, and, by the light of his smile, the pastor sees he is an altered man.

On hearing his tale, the apothecary hugs himself with the consolation of not having wife and children to make him anxious in these anxious times; "the single man escapes the easiest." But Hermann reproves him, asking, "Is it well that a man should feel himself alone in joy and sorrow, not understanding how to share these joys and sorrows? I never was so willing to marry as to-day; for many a good maiden needs

the protection of a husband, and many a man needs the bright consolation of a wife, in the shadow of misfortune." Hereupon the father, smiling, exclaims, "I hear you with pleasure; such a sensible word you have seldom uttered." And his mother also applauds him, referring to her marriage as an example. Memory travels back complacently to the day of her betrothal. It was in the midst of misfortune—a fire had destroyed all their property—but in that hour of misfortune their union was decided. The father here breaks in, and says the story is true, but evidently wishes to warn his son from any imitation of his own venture. With admirable art and humour his fatherly anxiety is depicted. He married a girl who had nothing when he himself had nothing; but now, when he is old and well to do in the world, this idea of beginning life upon no solid foundation of fortune is alarming to him. He paints the difficulties of keeping house, the advantages of fortune, and concludes with a decisive intimation to Hermann that he expects a rich daughter-in-law to be brought into the house. He indicates the daughters of a rich neighbour, and wishes Hermann to select one. But Hermann has not only a new love in his heart, he has an old repugnance to these rich neighbours, who mocked his simplicity, and ridiculed him because he was not as familiar with the personages of an opera as they were. This enrages his father, who upbraids him for being a mere peasant without culture, and who angrily declares he will have no peasant-girl brought into the house as his daughter-in-law, but a girl who can play the piano, and who can draw around her the finest people of the town. Hermann, in silence, quits the room; and thus closes the second canto.

The third canto carries on the story. Mine host continues his angry eloquence. It is his opinion that the son should always rise higher in the social scale than the father: for what would become of the house, or the nation, without this constant progress? "You are always unjust to your son," replies the mother, "and thus frustrate your own wishes. We must not hope to form children after our notions. As God has given them us, so must we have them and love them, bring them up as best we can, and let them have their own disposition. For some have this and others that gift. One is happy in one way, another in another. I won't have my Hermann abused. He is an excellent creature. But with daily snubbing and blame you crush

his spirit." And away she goes to seek her son. "A wonderful race the women," says the host, smiling, as his wife departs, "just like children. They all want to live after their own fashion, and yet be praised and caressed!" The old apothecary, carrying out the host's argument respecting the continual improvement of one's station, happily displays his character by a speech of quiet humour, describing his own anxiety to improve the appearance of his house, and how he has always been hindered by the fear of the expense. The contrast of characters in this poem is of the finest and sharpest: mother and father, pastor and apothecary, all stand before us in distinctive, yet unobtrusive, individuality, such as only the perfection of art achieves.

In the fourth canto, the mother seeks her son. The description of this search is a striking specimen of Goethe's descriptive poetry, being a series of pictures without a metaphor, without an image, without any of the picturesque aids which most poets employ; and yet it is vivid and picturesque in the highest degree. I wish I dared quote it. But the reader of German can seek it in the original; and translation is more than ever unjust to a poet, where style is in question.

In the stable she seeks him, expecting to find him with his favourite stallion; then she goes into the garden (not omitting to set up the tree-props and brush the caterpillars from the cabbages, like a careful housewife as she is!) then through the vineyard until she finds him seated under the pear-tree, in tears. A charming scene takes place between them. Hermann declares his intention of setting off in defence of fatherland; he is eloquent on the duties of citizens to give their blood for their country. But the mother knows very well it is no political enthusiasm thus suddenly moving him to quit his home; she has divined his love for Dorothea, the maiden whom he met among the emigrants; she questions him, and receives his confidence. Yes, it is because he loves Dorothea, and because his father has forbidden him to think of any but a rich bride, that he is about to depart. His father has always been unjust to him. Here interposes the mother; persuades Hermann to make the first advances to his father, certain that the paternal anger is mere hasty words, and that the dearest wish of Hermann's heart will not be disregarded. She brings him back with these hopes.

In the fifth canto the friends are still sipping from green glasses the cool Rhine wine, and arguing the old question.

To them enter mother and son. She reminds her husband how often they have looked forward to the day when Hermann should make choice of a bride. That day has arrived. He has chosen the Emigrant maiden. Mine host hears this in ominous stillness. The Pastor rises, and heartily backs Hermann in his prayer. He looks upon this choice as an inspiration from above, and knows Hermann well enough to trust him in such a choice. The father is still silent. The Apothecary, cautious ever, suggests a middle course. He does not trust implicitly in these inspirations from above. He proposes to inquire into the character of the maiden, and as he is not easily to be deceived, he undertakes to bring back a true report. I need scarcely point out the superiority of this treatment of the old story, wherein the lover first inquires into the character of the maiden, and then makes up his mind to have her. Hermann needs no inquiry—but neither does he shirk it. He urges the Apothecary to set off, and take the Pastor with him, two such experienced men being certain to detect the truth. For himself he is sure of the result. Mine host, finding wife and friends against him, consents, on a worthy report being brought by Pastor and Apothecary, to call Dorothea his daughter. The two commissioners seat themselves in the cart, and Hermann, mounting the box, drives them swiftly to the village. Arriving there, they get out. Hermann describes Dorothea, that they may recognise her; and awaits their return. Very graphic is the picture of this village, where the wanderers are crowded in barns and gardens, the streets blocked up with carts, men noisily attending to the lowing cows and horses, women busily washing and drying on every hedge, while the children dabble in the stream. Through this crowd the two friends wander, and witness a quarrel, which is silenced by an old magistrate, who afterwards gives them satisfactory details about Dorothea. This episode is full of happy touches and thoughtful poetry. The friends return joyful to Hermann, and tell him he may take Dorothea home. But while they have been inquiring about her, he, here on the threshold of his fate, has been torturing himself with doubts as to whether Dorothea will accept him. She may love another; what is more probable? She may refuse to come with them into a strange house. He begs them to drive home without him. He will alone ask Dorothea, and return on foot with her if she consent. The Pastor takes the reins, but the cautious

Apothecary, willing enough to entrust the Pastor with the care of his soul, has misgivings about his power of saving his body. The Pastor reassures him, and they disappear in a cloud of dust, leaving Hermann to gaze after them motionless, fixed in thought.

The next two cantos are exquisitely poetical. As Hermann stands by the spring, he sees Dorothea coming with a water jug in each hand. He approaches her, and she smiles a friendly smile at his approach. He asks why she comes so far from the village to fetch water. She answers that her trouble is well repaid if only because it enables her to see and thank him for the kindness he has shown to the sufferers; but also adds that the improvident men have allowed oxen and horses to walk into the streams, and so disturb all the water of the village. They then pass to the well, and sit upon the wall which protects it. She stoops, and dips a jug in the water; he takes the other jug and dips it also, and they see the image of themselves mirrored in the wavering blue of the reflected heavens, and they nod and greet each other in the friendly mirror. "Let me drink," says the joyous youth. And she holds the jug for him. Then they rest leaning upon the jugs in sweet confidence.[1]

She then asks him what has brought him here. He looks into her eyes, and feels happy, but dares not trust himself with the avowal. He endeavours to make her understand it in an indirect recital of the need there is at home for a young and active woman to look after the house and his parents. She thinks he means to ask her to come as servant in his house, and, being alone in the world, gladly consents. When he perceives her mistake he is afraid to undeceive her, and thinks it better to take her home and gain her affection there. "But let us go," she exclaims, "girls are always blamed who stay long at the fountain in gossip." They stand up, and once more look back into the well to see their images meeting in its water, and "sweet desires possess them."

[1] I cannot resist quoting the original of this charming picture:

Also sprach sie, und war die breiten Stufen hinunter
Mit dem Begleiter gelangt; und auf das Mäuerchen setzten
Beide sich nieder des Quells. Sie beugte sich über, zu schöpfen;
Und er fasste den anderen Krug, und beugte sich über.
Und sie sahen gespiegelt ihr Bild in der Bläue des Himmels
Schwanken, und nickten sich zu, und grüssten sie freundlich im Spiegel.
Lass mich trinken, sagte darauf der heitere Jüngling;
Und sie reicht' ihm den Krug. Dann ruhten sie Beide vertraulich
Auf die Gefässe gelehnt.

He accompanies her to the village, and witnesses, in the affection all bear to Dorothea, the best sign that his heart has judged aright. She takes leave of them all, and sets forth with Hermann, followed by the blessings and handkerchief-wavings of the emigrants. In silence they walk towards the setting sun, which tinges the storm-clouds threatening in the distance. On the way she asks him to describe the characters of those she is going to serve. He sketches father and mother. "And how am I to treat you, you the only son to my future master?" she asks. By this time they have reached the pear-tree, and the moon is shining overhead. He takes her hand, answering, "Ask your heart, and follow all it tells you." But he can go no farther in his declaration, fearing to draw upon himself a refusal. In silence they sit awhile and look upon the moon. She sees a window—it is Hermann's, who hopes it will soon be hers. They rise to continue their course, her foot slips, she falls into his arms; breast against breast, cheek against cheek, they remain a moment, he not daring to press her to him, merely supporting her. In a few minutes more they enter the house.

The charm of these cantos, as indeed of the whole poem, cannot of course be divined from the analysis I am making; the perfume of a violet is not to be found in the description of the violet. But with all drawbacks, the analysis enables a reader of imagination to form a better conception of the poem than he would form from an æsthetical discussion such as philosophical criticism indulges in. With this caveat let our analysis proceed. The mother is uneasy at this long absence of Hermann; comes in and out, noting the appearances of the storm, and is rather sharp in her blame of the two friends for leaving him without securing the maiden. The Apothecary narrates how he was taught patience in youth; and, the door opening, presents the young couple to their glad eyes. Hermann introduces her, but tells the Pastor aside that as yet there has been no talk of marriage; she only supposes her place to be that of servant. The host, wishing to be gallant, goes at once to the point, treats her as his daughter, and compliments her on her taste in having chosen his son. She blushes, is pained, and replies with some reproach that for such a greeting she was unprepared. With tears in her eyes she paints her forlorn condition, and the secret escapes her, that, touched by Hermann's generosity and noble bearing, she really has begun to feel the love for him they twit her with; but having made that confession, of course she can no longer

stay; and she is departing with grief in her heart when the mistake is cleared up; she is accepted, dowerless, by them all, and Hermann, in pressing her to his heart, feels prepared for the noble struggle of life.

Such is the story of *Hermann und Dorothea*, which is written in Homeric hexameters, with Homeric simplicity. In the ordinary course of things, I should be called upon to give some verdict on the much-vexed question as to whether, properly speaking, this poem is an Epic or an Idyll, or, by way of compromise, an Idyllic Epic. The critics are copious in distinctions and classifications. They tell us in what consists the Epos proper, which they distinguish from the Romantic Epos, and from the Bourgeois Epos; and then these heavy batteries are brought to bear on *Hermann und Dorothea*. Well! if these discussions gratify the mind, and further any of the purposes of Literature, let those, whose bent lies that way, occupy themselves therewith. To me it seems idle to trouble oneself whether *Hermann und Dorothea* is or is not an Epic, or what kind of Epic it should be called. It is a poem. One cannot say more for it. If it be unlike all other poems, there is no harm in that; if it resemble some other poems, the resemblance does not enhance its charm. Let us accept it for what it is, a poem full of life, character, and beauty; simple in its materials, astonishingly simple in its handling; written in obvious imitation of Homer, and yet preserving throughout the most modern colour and sentiment. Of all Idylls, it is the most truly idyllic. Of all poems describing country life and country people, it is the most truthful; and on comparing it with Theocritus or Virgil, with Guarini or Tasso, with Florian or Delille, with Gesner or Thomson, the critic will note with interest its absence of poetic ornamentation, its freedom from all "idealisation." Its peasants are not such as have been fashioned in Dresden China, or have solicited the palette of Lancret and Watteau; but are as true as poetry can represent them. The characters are wonderfully drawn, with a few decisive unobtrusive touches. Shakspeare himself is not more dramatic in the presentation of character. The Host, his wife, the Pastor, the old cautious Apothecary, stand before us in all their humours. Hermann, the stalwart peasant, frank, simple, and shy, and Dorothea the healthy, affectionate, robust, simple peasant girl, are ideal characters in the best sense, viz., in the purity of nature. Those "ideal peasants" with Grecian features and

irreproachable linen, so loved of bad painters and poor poets, were not at all the figures Goethe cared to draw; he had faith in nature, which would not allow him to idealise.

Very noteworthy is it that he, like Walter Scott, could find a real pleasure in talking with the common people, such as astonished his daughter-in-law (from whom, among others, I learned the fact), who could not comprehend what pleasure this great intellect found in conversation with an old woman baking her bread, or an old carpenter planing a fir-plank. He would talk with his coachman, pointing out to him the peculiarities of the scenery, and delighting in his remarks. Stately and silent as he often was to travelling bores, and to literary men with no ideas beyond the circle of books, he was loquacious and interested whenever one of the people came in his way; and the secret of this was his abiding interest in every individuality. A carpenter, who was a carpenter, interested him; but the carpenter in Sunday clothes, aping the bourgeois, would have found him as silent and stately as every other pretender found him. What Scott gathered from his intercourse with the people, every one knows who has noticed the rich soil of humour on which Scott's antiquarian fancies are planted; what Goethe gathered from the same source may be read in most of his works, especially in *Hermann und Dorothea*, *Faust*, and *Wilhelm Meister*.

The same objective truth is noticeable in his delineation of the scenes. They are not rhetorically or metaphorically described, they are presented directly to us. Instead of saying what they are like, he says what they *are*. Hence it is that while this poem is essentially *popular* (and on its first appearance produced a deep impression on the people, was reprinted on the coarsest paper, at the lowest prices, such as only occurs with the people's literature), it is also one of the greatest favourites with highly cultured readers. Between these two classes there is a third class, cultivated indeed, but not sufficiently cultivated, which finds the simplicity of this poem undistinguishable from baldness. Such readers desire imagery, and cannot see the art which dispenses with it; they want more stirring incidents, and characters stalking upon stilts.

As I do not enter upon the discussion of whether the poem is or is not an Epic, I may leave undisturbed all the derivative questions respecting the absence of *similes*, *episodes*, and *supernatural machinery* — which the critics assure us are indispensable to the Epic—as also the other subsidiary matters of

action, time, and space. By so doing the bulk of this chapter is materially diminished, and the reader not materially impoverished. Two points only require notice, and those shall be briefly touched.

First of the subject-matter. Taken from the sad experiences of the hour, moving amid scenes made desolate by the French Revolution, it was natural that something of political significance should be sought in this story. Schiller would undoubtedly have made it the vehicle of splendid eloquence on Freedom, such as would have made the pulses beat. But that was nowise Goethe's tendency. He told Meyer that he had endeavoured "in an epic crucible to free from its dross the pure human existence of a small German town, and at the same time mirror in a small glass the great movements and changes of the world's stage."[1] While leaving to others the political problem, he confined himself as usual to the purely human and individual interest. Instead of declamations on Freedom, he tried to teach men to be free; and by Freedom he meant the complete healthy development of their own natures, not a change of political institutions. In one of the *Xenien* he says:

> Zur Nation euch zu bilden, ihr hoffet es, Deutsche, vergebens.
> Bildet, ihr könnt es, dafür freier zu Menschen euch aus.[2]

And in this sense *Hermann und Dorothea* may be accepted as a Hymn to the Family, a solemn vindication of the eternal claims which, as a first necessity, should occupy men.

With regard to the second point, that namely of style, Schiller's cordial praise, in a letter to Meyer, may here find place. "Nor have we in the meantime been inactive, as you know, and least of all our friend, who in the last few years has really surpassed himself. His epic poem you have read; you will admit that it is the pinnacle of his and all our modern art. I have seen it grow up, and have wondered almost as much at the manner of its growth as at the completed work. Whilst the rest of us are obliged painfully to collect and to prune, in order slowly to bring forth anything passable, he has only gently to shake the tree, in order to have fall to him the most beautiful fruit, ripe and heavy. It is incredible with what ease he now reaps for himself the fruits of a well-bestowed life and

[1] *Briefe an und von Goethe.*

[2] "Germans, you hope in vain to develop yourselves into a nation; strive, therefore, to develop yourselves all the more freely into men."

persistent culture; how significant and sure all his steps now re; how the clearness as to himself and as to objects, preerves him from every idle effort and beating about. But you ave him now yourself, and can satisfy yourself of all this with our own eyes. But you will agree with me in this, that on he summit where he now stands, he ought to think more of ringing the beautiful form he has given himself to outward xhibition, than to go out in search of new material; in short, hat he now ought to live entirely for poetic execution."

The Homeric form is admirably adapted to this kind of arrative; and Voss had already made it popular by his *Luise*. Respecting the style of this poem, I would further beg the eader to compare it with that of the last books of *Wilhelm Meister*, composed about the same period, and he will then ee Goethe's immense superiority on quitting prose for poetry. Tone of the faults of his prose are traceable here. The lanuage is as clear as crystal, and as simple; the details are all, ithout exception, significant; not a line could be lopped away ithout injury. One feels that the invigorating breezes of lmenau have roused the poet out of the flaccid moods of rose, and given him all his quiet strength.

Before finally dismissing the poem, it may amuse the reader o have a specimen of that ingenious criticism which delights n interpreting the most obvious facts into profound meanings. Hegel, in his *Æsthetik*, and after him Rosenkrantz, in his exellent book *Goethe und seine Werke*, call attention to the fact hat Goethe is far truer in his *German* colouring than Voss, hose *Luise* gave the impulse to this poem. Not having read he *Luise* I am unable to judge of this superiority; but the xample cited by these critics is assuredly amusing. Voss, they ell us, makes his people drink copiously of coffee; but, howver wide-spread the custom of coffee-drinking, we must reember that coffee, and the sugar which sweetens it, are not *Germa*n, they come from Arabia and the West Indies; the ery cups in which the coffee is drunk are of Chinese origin, ot German. We are miles away from Germany. How difrent is Goethe! His host of the Golden Lion refreshes uests with a glass of wine; and what wine? Rhine wine; the erman wine, *par excellence;* the wine growing on the hill ehind his own house! And this Rhine wine, is it not drunk ut of green glasses, the genuine German glasses? And upon hat do these glasses stand? Upon a tin tray: that is also enuine German!

It would be the merest prosaism to suggest that in *Luise* th pastor drinks coffee, because coffee is habitually drunk in th parsonage; while in *Hermann und Dorothea* the characte drink wine, because they are in the *Golden Lion*, and Rhin wine, because they are in the Rhine country; yet to suc prosaisms is the British critic reduced in answering the subtl ties of German æsthetics.

CHAPTER V

THE THEATRICAL MANAGER

It will be briefer, and help to convey a more accurate notic of Goethe's efforts in the direction of the Theatre, if, instea of scattering through this biography a number of isolate details, recording small events in chronological order, endeavour to present some general view of his manageri efforts.

We have already seen how, on his arrival at Weimar, th court was given to theatrical entertainments, and how eager he entered into them. The Theatre was in ruin from the fi of the previous year. Theatres were improvised in the Ette burg woods, and Tiefurt valley, whereon the gay courtie "strutted their brief hour" by torchlight, to the accompan ment of horns. Actors were improvised from the court circl Plays were improvised, and sometimes written with elaborat care. The public was the public of private theatricals. A this has been narrated in Book IV. What we have here to d with it is to call attention to the contrast thus presented by th Weimar stage with other German stages, and, above all, wit the essential conditions of a stage which is to be anythin more than the amusement of a dilettante circle. The dram is essentially a national outgrowth. In Weimar, instead growing out of a popular tendency, and appealing to th people, it grew out of the idleness of a court, and appeale to dilettantism. The actors, instead of being recruited fro runaway clerks, ambitious apprentices, romantic barbers, an scapegrace students, were princes, noblemen, poets, musician Instead of playing to a Public,—that heterogeneous, but i dramatic matters indispensable, jury, whose verdicts are i the main always right—they played to courtiers, whose jud

ent, even when unfettered, would not have had much value; nd it never was unfettered. The consequence may be fore- een. As a court amusement, the theatre was a pleasant and ot profitless recreation; as an influence, it was pernicious. he starting point was false. Not so can dramatic art flourish; ot so are Molières and Shakspeares allowed to manifest eir strength. The national co-operation is indispensable. cademies may compile Dictionaries, they cannot create iterature; and Courts may patronise Theatres, they cannot reate a Drama. The reason lies deep in the nature of things. ermany has never had a Drama, because she has never had Stage which could be, or would be, national. Lessing knew hat was needed, but he had not the power to create it. chiller early mistook the path, and all his noble strivings ere frustrated.

Goethe and Schiller, profoundly in earnest, and profoundly onvinced of the great influences to be exercised by the stage, ndeavoured to create a German Drama which should stand igh above the miserable productions then vitiating public ste. They aspired to create an Ideal Drama, in which the oftiest forms of Art should be presented. But they made a lse step at the outset. Disgusted with the rude productions f the day, and distrusting the instincts of the public, they ppealed to the cultivated few. Culture was set above Passion nd Humour, Literature above Emotion. The stage was to be terary; which is saying, in other words, that it was not to be opular. Nor did experience enlighten them. During the hole period of their reform, the principal performances were f the old style. At first a wandering troupe, with a wandering epertory, performed opera, drama, and farce, as best it could, ith more real success than High Art could boast. Even hen Schiller had ennobled the stage with his masterpieces, he ever pressing necessity of *amusing* the public forced the anager to give the vulgar appetite its vulgar food.[1] The ramatic problem is: How to unite the demands of an udience insisting on amusement, with the demands of Art, oking beyond amusement? There are many writers who an amuse, but who reach no higher aim; and there are riters who have lofty aims, but cannot amuse. In the drama he first class is nearer the mark than the second; but the ue dramatist is he who can unite the two. Shakspeare and

[1] Goethe confesses so much. See *Eckermann*, vol. i. p. 305; Oxenford's nslation.

Molière—to take the greatest examples—are as amusing as the
are profound; and they live only because they continue t
amuse. *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Tartuffe*, *L'école des Femme*
and the *Malade Imaginaire*, may be enjoyed by the pit, an
by the most cultivated critic. Goethe and Schiller fell into th
error which in England, a few years ago, was preached as
gospel by a band of clever writers, who gloried in the title
"Unacted Dramatists"; the error of supposing a magnificer
dome could be erected without a basis on our common earth
the error of supposing that a Drama could be more successfu
as Literature, than as the reflection of national life.

It was in 1790 that the Weimar Theatre was rebuilt an
reopened. Goethe undertook the direction with powers mo
absolute than any other director ever had; for he was inde
pendent even of success. The court paid all expenses; th
stage was left free for him to make experiments upon. H
made them, and they all failed. He superintended rehearsa
with great care. Shakspeare's *King John* and *Henry IV.*, h
own *Gross-Kophta*, *Bürgergeneral*, *Clavigo*, *Die Geschwiste*
were produced, but without any great effect; for the acto
were mediocre and ill paid, and there was no audience t
stimulate actors by enthusiasm and criticism. The audienc
was chilled by the presence of the court, and could rarely b
emboldened into rapture, which is the life, the pulse, th
stimulus of acting. The pit was cowed by the court, and th
court was cowed by Goethe. His contempt of public opinio
was undisguised. "The direction," he wrote to his second i
command, "acts according to its own views, and not in th
least according to the demands of the public. Once for al
understand that the public must be controlled—*will determini
seyn.*" To Schiller, who was quite of this opinion, he said
"No one can serve two masters, and of all masters the la
that I would select is the public which sits in a Germa
theatre." It is all very well for a poet or a philosopher t
scorn the fleeting fashions of the day, and to rely on th
verdict of posterity; but the Drama appeals to the public
the day, and while the manager keeps his eye on posterity, th
theatre is empty.

Wer machte denn der Mitwelt Spass?

"Who is to amuse the present?" asks the sensible Mer
Andrew, in the Theatre-Prologue to *Faust*. A dramati
appealing to posterity, is like an orator hoping to convince th

escendants of his audience instead of persuading the listening rowd.

The Weimar audiences might be treated despotically, but ney could not be forced into enthusiasm for that which earied them. They submitted in silence. The riotous allery and dogged pit of France and England only tolerate ie absurdities which delight *them;* they admit no arbiter but heir own amusement. An infusion of this rebellious element ould have aided Goethe and Schiller in their efforts, by arning them from many a mistake. The Jena students ight have supplied this element, had they been more con-ant visitors, and less controlled. The student is by nature hd profession a rebel; and the Jena student had this tend-ncy cultivated into a system. To be a roaring swash-uckler, with profound contempt for all *Philistines*, and a vast apacity for beer, was not, indeed, enough to constitute a pure idge of art; but to be young, full of life and impulse, and oove all to be independent, were primary qualities in a ramatic audience; and the students brought such qualities nto the pit. "Without them," says the worthy Klebe in his escription of Weimar, "the house would often be empty. hey generally come in the afternoon, and ride or drive back fter the play." If they enlivened the Theatre, they scandalised ie town. Imagination pictures them arriving covered with ust, in garbs of varied and eccentric device, ambitious of ppearing as different from "humdrum" citizens as might be: dorned with tower-shaped caps, with motley ornaments of ssel, lace, &c., from under which escape flowing locks quite nocent of comb, which mingle with beard and moustache. heir short jackets are lined with stuffs of different colour. heir legs are cased in riding trousers, the inner sides of hich are of leather. In their hands is the famous long whip, hich they crack as they pour from the Webicht over the idge into the town, startling its provincial dulness with an proar by them called "singing"—a musical entertainment hich they vary by insulting the not imposing soldiers, whom ey christen "tree-frogs," on account of the green and yellow niform. They push to the utmost the license and pride of ie "Renomist," namely, to be ill-mannered.

When these students poured into the theatre, they carried ere something like enthusiasm; but they were controlled one who had a very mediocre admiration of their wild ays—the Geheimrath Goethe, who was not only *Geheim-*

rath and Manager, but their idol.[1] Of him Edward Devrien in his excellent history of the German stage,[2] says: "He sa in the centre of the pit; his powerful glance governed an directed the circle around him, and bridled the dissatisfied o neutral. On one occasion, when the Jena students, whos arbitrary judgment was very unseasonable to him, expresse their opinion too tumultuously, he rose, commanded silence and threatened to have the disturbers turned out by th hussars on guard. A similar scene took place in 1802 on th representation of Fr. Schlegel's *Alarcos*, which appeared to th public too daring an attempt, and the approbation given b the loyal party provoked a loud laugh of opposition. Goeth rose and called out with a voice of thunder: 'Let no on laugh!' At last he went so far as for some time to forbi any audible expression on the part of the public, whether o approval or disapproval. He would suffer no kind of dis turbance in what he held to be suitable. Over criticism h kept a tight rein; hearing that Bötticher was writing an essa on his direction of the theatre, he declared that if it appeare he would resign his post; and Bötticher left the article un printed."

Holding this despotic position towards the public, it ma be imagined that he was imperious enough with the actors Both he and Schiller were of opinion that nothing short of th "brief imperative" was of any use with actors—*denn durc Vernunft und Gefälligkeit ist nichts auszurichten*, said Schille Goethe as director would hear of no opposition, would liste to none of the egotistical claims which usually tormen managers; he insisted on each doing what was allotted t him. Resistance was at once followed by punishment; h sent the men to the guard-house, and had sentinels place before the doors of the women, confining them to their room With the leading actors he employed other means: once whe Becker refused to play a small part in *Wallenstein's Lage* Goethe informed him that if he did not undertake the par he, Goethe, would play it himself—a threat which at onc vanquished Becker, who knew it would be fulfilled.

Nevertheless with all this despotism he was still the grea high-minded, lovable Goethe, and was reverenced by th

[1] See HEINRICH SCHMIDT: *Erinnerungen eines Weimarischen Veterane* p. 46, describing the enthusiasm with which he and DE WETTE and the friends read Goethe's poems, and wrote poems in his praise.

[2] *Geschichte der deutschen Schauspiel-Kunst.*

ctors who were under him. Chancellor von Müller says at "Nowhere did he more freely exercise the spell of his mposing presence; rigorous and earnest in his demands, nalterable in his determinations, prompt and delighted to cknowledge every successful attempt, attentive to the smallest s to the greatest, and calling forth in every one his most dden powers—in a narrow circle, and often with slender eans, he accomplished what appeared incredible; his en- ouraging glance was a rich reward; his kind word an in- aluable gift. Every one felt himself greater and more powerful the place which he had assigned to him, and the stamp his approbation seemed to be a sort of consecration for life. o one who has not seen and heard with what pious fidelity e veterans of that time of Goethe's and Schiller's cheerful pirited co-operation, treasured every recollection of these eir heroes; with what transport they dwelt on every detail their proceedings; and how the mere mention of their mes called forth the flash of youthful pleasure from their es; can have an idea of the affectionate attachment and thusiastic veneration those great men inspired."

It appears from Edward Devrient's account that the actors ere miserably paid. Even Caroline Jagemann—the duke's istress—who was prima donna, as well as leading actress, ceived only six hundred thalers a year, with a retiring nsion of three hundred; and six hundred thalers is about ne hundred pounds sterling. Moreover, the actors were not lowed a *congé*, as at other theatres; so that no money could e made by them beyond their salaries.[1] Except to confessed ediocrity, Weimar could scarcely have offered a temptation; evertheless, the magic names of Goethe and Schiller did tract a few good actors.

The shifts to which the management was forced to have course, with so small and insufficient a troupe, may be thered from this anecdote. The opera of *Die Zauberflöte* as performed, but the Queen of Night was so far advanced pregnancy, that it was impossible to let her appear in that ndition. Another singer was not to be had. In this dilemma oethe actually made her sing the music behind the scenes, hile an actress on the stage pantomimically represented the aracter.

When the connection between Schiller and Goethe grew

[1] On the various salaries paid to actors at Weimar, see PASQUE: *Goethe's heaterleitung in Weimar*, i.

closer, the Theatre began to assume a really earnest aspect. With his natural tendency to interest himself in whatever deeply interested his friends, Goethe caught some of Schiller's dramatic enthusiasm, and began to treat the stage as a means of artistic education for the nation. *Don Carlos* was performed; somewhat later *Egmont* was adapted to the stage by Schiller (in a melodramatic style which revealed his love of material effects), and the greatest undertaking of all was achieved, namely, the performance of *Wallenstein*. The effect was prodigious, and the Weimar stage seemed really to have achieved something like the establishment of a new and grandiose style of dramatic representation. It was, however, but a flash. The strivings of the two poets were misdirected, as the event soon proved. No drama could so be founded. The dramatic age had passed, and could not be restored—not at least in such forms.

"The Weimar School," says Devrient,[1] who is here speaking *ex professo*, and is worth attending to, "although it demanded of the artist 'to produce something resembling nature,'[2] nevertheless set up a new standard of nobleness and beauty, by which every phenomenon in the region of Art was to be tested. The tendency hitherto dominant had by no means neglected the beautiful, but it had sought only a *beautiful reality*,—now with subtle distinction, *beautiful truth* was demanded from it. Hitherto *living nature* had served as the standard, now an *enlightened taste* was to be the rule. The actors were to disaccustom themselves to the native German manner, and find a freer, a more universal conception; they were to raise themselves out of the narrow limits of the special, of the individual to the contemplation of the general, of the Ideal.

"These were astoundingly new and hard demands on the actor. Hitherto a plain understanding, with vivid and sensitive feelings, had tolerably well sufficed to make this natural talent tell; for the problems lay within the actor's circle of vision. Now, appeal was principally made to his taste; he was required to have a refined instinct, and ennobled sentiment which, to a certain degree, presupposed scientific and antiquarian culture; for instead of *nature*, as hitherto, the antique was now the model of speech and feature. The actual culture of the histrionic class was not in the remotest degree adequate to these demands; what then was to be done? The Weimar

[1] *Geschichte der deutschen Schauspiel-Kunst*, p. 255.
[2] *Goethe's Vorrede zu den Propyläen.*

chool must content itself with *training:* it must seek to
pply by external drilling what ought properly to have pro-
eeded from a higher intellectual life, from an intrinsically
nnobled nature. Nothing else remained to it. The spirit of
ur literature was pressing forward with unexampled power to
hat summit on which it could from thenceforth measure itself
ith that of all other nations; it carried along with it theatrical
rt, such as it was. If the attempt had been made to advance
he culture of actors as far as was necessary in order to bring
even with the victorious march of our literature, the moment
ould have been lost in which the stage could render im-
easurable service to the national culture.

"Goethe and Schiller had essentially this mission: to
levate poetry; to carry the intellectual life of the nation into
igher ideal regions; literature was their *immediate* object, the
tage only a secondary one; nay, it was with them only a
neans to an end. To work with entire devotion to dramatic
rt, solely for it and through it, as Molière and Shakspeare
id, never occurred to them; nor would they imitate Lessing,
ho attached himself closely to art, to what it achieved, and
ould achieve. They placed themselves and their poems on
he stand-point of the independent *literary* drama. The old
chism between the *genres* again presented itself; the scholarly
opposition to the popular drama; and poetic art again won
he supremacy over dramatic. *Don Carlos* and *Wallenstein*
ere not conceived for the actual stage, and could only be
dapted to it with great labour and sacrifice; in writing *Faust*,
Tasso, and the *Natürliche Tochter*, Goethe did not contemplate
heir representation, which must be considered purely as a
heatrical experiment. It was a natural consequence that,
nce the two great poets adapted their works to the theatre
ust as it was, and were by no means excessively fastidious in
heir mode of doing it, they, with the same sort of violence,
ushed forward the art of representation, and here also had to
ontent themselves with what could be achieved by merely
xternal discipline. Dramatic art had not reached that point
f culture which could prepare it perfectly to comprehend and
aster their poems, and reproduce them independently. . . .
ow if this new school was to make its authority in taste
cknowledged, that authority must necessarily be exercised
ith a certain despotism. With despotism towards the actors
nd the public, since both were deeply imbued with naturalism.
ike the unfortunate Neuber, like Schroeder in his eightieth

year, Schiller and Goethe placed themselves in decided opposition to the taste of the majority. They maintained a thorough aristocratic position with respect to the public, and defended the ideal principle with all the power of their pre-eminent genius; nay, they did not scorn to attack the prevalent taste with the sharpest weapons of satire. Their correspondence exhibits their contempt for the masses, and for the champions of the popular taste, in all that rudeness which seems inseparable from the enthusiasm of great souls for a more exalted humanity. Nowhere did they sue for the approbation of the multitude; nowhere did they accommodate themselves to the ruling taste, or even flatter it.

"The despotic energy with which Goethe carried out the ideal principle, in spite of all difficulties, necessarily made itself felt in his direction of the theatre. He had to urge forward dramatic art, and to wring from the public a formal respect for the experiments of his school; a double task which obliged him to surpass even Schroeder in the peremptoriness of his commands."

Not only were there difficulties of rhythm, but also of pronunciation, to be overcome. The German language, harsh as it is at the best, becomes hideous in the careless license of pronunciation which various cities and classes adopt—a people who are too ugly to hope for any admiration, come at last entirely to neglect their appearance. The Suabians, Austrians, and especially the Weimarians, plagued Goethe terribly with their peculiarities of speech. "One would scarcely believe that *b*, *p*, *d*, and *t*, are generally considered to be *four* different letters," said the poet to Eckermann, "for they only speak of a hard and a soft *b*, and of a hard and a soft *d*, and thus seem tacitly to intimate that *p* and *t* do not exist.[1] With such people *Pein* (pain) is like *Bein* (leg), *Pass* (pass) like *Bass* (bass), and *Teckel* (a terrier) like *Deckel* (cover)." Thus an actor, in an impassioned moment bidding his mistress cease her reproaches, exclaimed *O ente* (O duck!) meaning *O ende* (Oh, cease!)

The success of *Wallenstein*, which was a theatrical no less than an artistic success, seemed to have decided the battle in favour of the Ideal school; seemed, but did not. Art was henceforth to be everything. So far did Goethe carry out his

[1] LUDECUS in his book, *Aus Goethe's Leben: Wahrheit und keine Dichtung*, tells a story of GRAF, Schiller's favourite actor, who on seeing the great TALMA exclaimed, "*Dalma ist ein Gott!*"

inciple of placing Art foremost,[1] that he would not suffer e actors to "forget the audience"; his maxim was, that in scene between two actors, the presence of the spectator ould constantly be felt. Consequently the actors were not owed to stand in profile, or to turn their backs upon the dience, or to speak at the back of the stage, under any etext. They were to *recite*, not to *be* the characters repre- nted. Heinrich Schmidt narrates how Goethe in giving m lessons in acting, entered into the minutest details. In e celebrated monologue of Hamlet, "To be or not to be," allowed Schmidt to place his right hand upon his chin, hile the left hand supported the right elbow; but would not rmit this left hand to be closed like a fist, insisting that the o middle fingers should be held together, the thumb and e other two fingers kept apart.[2] In acting, he reversed his d artistic maxim, and insisted on Beauty first, Truth after- ards: *erst schön dann wahr*.[3]

It will surprise no one that this tendency, this preoccupation th the Ideal, should result in the rehabilitation of the most rfect form of drama which that tendency has produced—I ean the French Tragedy, so pitilessly ridiculed by Lessing. ay, Goethe himself translated Voltaire's *Mahomet*, which as played in 1800, and afterwards *Tancred*. The *Adelphi* of erence, translated by Einsiedel; the *Ion* of Schlegel; the *hèdre* of Racine, translated by Schiller; and finally Schiller's n *Braut von Messina*, sufficiently show the wide departure om anything like a modern national drama into which the eimar school had wandered. Nay, even Shakspeare had to ffer the indignity of being elevated by this classical mania. hiller translated his *Macbeth*—how he travestied it may be en by the curious reader; enough to mention here that he anges the Witches into Fates; and we learn from Heinrich oss that these terrible sisters were represented by young girls autifully dressed! We need not, therefore, be surprised on aring that Terence's comedy was actually represented by tors in Roman Masks,—thus entirely getting rid of Expres- n, which forms the basis of modern acting. So deplorable nistake needs only to be mentioned to be appreciated. One

[1] See his *Rules for Actors* in *Werke*, xxxv. pp. 435-459.

[2] *Erinnerungen*, p. 110

[3] Remnants of the old Weimar school still talk of these days, and of the ling which it was necessary to give the actors. From one, to whom Goethe very kind, I heard full confirmation of what is said in the text.

step alone remained for dilettantism; and that step was t
give the actors the cothurnus, and make them spout Latin an
Greek.

During these antique restorations, experiments were mad
with Shakspeare, Calderon, Gozzi—with everything but th
life of the people—and Weimar was proclaimed a great scho
of Art, in which the *literary* public religiously believed. Bu
the other public? Goethe himself shall answer. "Here i
Weimar they have done me the honour to perform my *Iphigeni*
and my *Tasso*," he said to Eckermann in his old age. "Bu
how often? Scarcely once in three or four years. The publi
finds them tedious. Very probably. . . . I really had th
notion once that it was possible to found a German Drama
but there was no emotion or excitement—all remained as
was before."

To found a German Drama by means of poetic works, an
antique restorations, was the delusion of one who was essentiall
not a dramatist. I have more than once denied to Goeth
the peculiar genius which makes the dramatist; and my denia
is not only supported by the evidence of his own works, it is
I think, conclusively established by his critical reflections o
Shakspeare, and his theatrical treatment of Shakspeare's work
Profoundly as he appreciated the poet, he seems to me wholl
to have misunderstood the dramatist. He actually asser
that *Hamlet's* Ghost, and the Witches in *Macbeth*, are example
of Shakspeare's "representing what would better be imagined"
that in the reading, these figures are acceptable, but in th
acting they disturb, nay repel, our emotion. So radical
misconception need not be dwelt on. The reader, who doe
not at once perceive it, may rest assured that he is wholly un
acquainted with the secrets of dramatic art. As an exampl
of Goethe's entire misunderstanding of Shakspeare's art,
will cite the version he made of *Romeo and Juliet*, of whic
he was not a little proud. The subject is of sufficient litera
interest—considering the two names implicated—to warra
a digression.

It was in 1811 that he undertook to recast *Romeo and Juli*
for the stage; and as this version has recently been recovere
and printed by Boas,[1] we can examine it at leisure. The
is scarcely any Shakspearian play which a great poet an
dramatist might so reasonably undertake to recast as *Rom*

[1] *Nachträge zu Goethe's Werken.*

id Juliet; for while it is instinct with life, character, and ramatic movement, it is in some respects among the worst Shakspeare's fine plays. Juvenility of style is apparent in most every scene. The frequence of rhyme, the forced etoric and conceits, the lame expression, and the deficiency that passionate and profound poetry which illuminates the eat plays, prove it to be an early work. In most of the eat situations we find long tirades of rhetorical *concetti* in ace of the nervous language, strongly coloured by passion, hich Shakspeare afterwards knew so well how to employ. hus when Juliet is in agony of suspense as to whether omeo is dead, she says:

> This torture should be roared in dismal hell.
> Hath Romeo slain himself? Say thou but *I*,
> And that bare vowel, *I*, shall poison more
> Than the death-darting *eye* of cockatrice:
> I am not I, if there be such an *I*.

here are critics who will defend this (what will they not efend in Shakspeare?) and find plausible arguments to show at it is true passion; but I do not advise any modern poet write thus, if he would win the admiration of these critics.

It will not be supposed, however, that I am dead to the eauty of this work, which, because of its pre-eminent qualities, an universal favourite. It is the work of Shakspeare *young*, it indisputably Shakspeare. He has not only presented the ory with wonderful vividness and variety, but he has crowded with *characters*, and animated those characters with true amatic motives. Think of old Capulet, Tybalt, the Nurse, eter, Gregory and Sampson, and the Apothecary,—all epi-dical figures, yet each having his well-marked individuality. y touches brief yet free and masterly the figures stand out om the canvas.

One would imagine that a dramatist who undertook to medy the defects of this work, would throw all his labour to those parts where the work is weakest, and thus free the h harvest of dramatic thought from all the chaff and stubble; e would certainly never expect him to remove any of those vid touches which give life to the characters, or any of those amatic presentations of the subject which animate the scene. et this, and this only, has Goethe done.[1]

Shakspeare opens with one of his life-like expositions,

[1] *Nachträge zu Goethe's Werken.*

pregnant with purpose, and arresting attention at the outset. The Capulet servants are swaggering in the streets of Verona and no sooner do they meet the servants of the Montague than at once they come to blows. Tybalt and Benvolio quickly join the fray: old Capulet and old Montague are not long behind. The whole feud of the two houses—that which forms the *nodus* of the piece—lives before us. The entrance of the Prince, threatening death to the man who next disturbs the peace of Verona, introduces another tragic motive. The whole exposition is a masterly specimen of dramatic art. But Goethe had so little sense of what was dramatic, that he strikes out this exposition, and opens his version like a comic opera, with a chorus of servants who are arranging lamps and garlands before Capulet's house:

Zündet die Lampen an
Windet auch Kränze dran
Hell sey das Haus!
&c. &c.

Maskers pass into the house. Romeo and Benvolio enter and *talk*. They *tell* us of that family feud, which Shakspeare made us *see*. Rosalind is alluded to by Romeo, but all the fantastic hyperbole of desire which Shakspeare's Romeo expresses (in direct contrast with the expression of his *passion* for Juliet), is struck out. The two enter Capulet's house where Benvolio promises to show him a lovelier face than Rosalind's. Before they enter, however, Mercutio arrives and at this point the student of Shakspeare will uplift his eyebrows when he sees how Goethe has contrived to destroy this poetic creation. Not only is the celebrated Mab speech omitted, but Mercutio declares he will keep out of the ball room, lest he should be discovered—by his handsome figure. The whole of this must be translated, or my readers may withhold their credence.[1]

Romeo. Come with us.
Get you a mantle, get a stranger's mask.
Mercutio. In vain I don the mask, it helps me not.
I'm known by every child, and must be known.
I am a distinguished man; there is a character in my figure and voice, in my walk, in my every movement.

[1] In a letter to Frau von Wolzogen, he speaks of his recently completed version thus: "The maxim which I followed, was to concentrate all that was most interesting, and bring it into harmony; for Shakspeare, following the bent of his genius, his time, and his public, was forced to bring together much that was not harmonious, to flatter the reigning taste." *Literarisch. Nachlass der Frau von Wolzogen*, vol. i. p. 437.

Benvolio. Truly! thy paunch has a charming look.
Mercutio. It is easy for you to talk—toothpicks, beanstalks as you are! u hang rag after rag upon you: who will unpack you? But I with the aviest mantle, with the most outrageous nose, I have only to appear, and ne one directly whispers behind, "There goes Mercutio! By my faith, is Mercutio!" That indeed would be immensely vexatious were it no ory. And since I am Mercutio, let me be Mercutio, and always Mercutio! ow, good-bye to you. Do your business as well as you can, I seek my ventures on my pillow. An airy dream shall delight me, while you run er your dreams, and can no more catch them than I can.

I shall be brisk when o'er you weeps the dawn,
While you for weariness, or love, will yawn. *Exit.*

to *this* has Mercutio been metamorphosed! The ball scene llows. The Nurse, indeed, is introduced, but all her individuality is destroyed; every one of the characteristic touches washed out by an unsparing sponge. In his essay on hakspeare he gives us the clue to these omissions; for he ys "that the Nurse and Mercutio almost entirely destroy e tragic meaning of the story, and are to be regarded as rcical additions, which the modern stage repudiates."[1] The terations in this scene are not important, and are chiefly the esence of the Prince, who comes to the ball with Mercutio, s object being to mix in the society of Capulet and Montague, d so bring about amity between the houses. The old feud again *talked* of: as if talking could take the place of doing! he rest of the piece follows the original pretty closely; there e only two alterations which call for notice; one an improvent, and one an extraordinary and inexplicable blunder.

To begin with the blunder: The reader knows with what arpness Shakspeare has contrasted the calm respectable ris, who woos Juliet through her parents, and the fervid meo, who goes direct to Juliet herself; one seeks the her's consent, without troubling himself about the maid; e other seeks the maid's consent, and braves the enmity the father. What will the reader think of Goethe's amatic ideas, on hearing that this contrast is entirely aced: Paris makes love to Juliet; has long adored her silence, before he ventured to ask her parent's consent!

The second alteration is a dramatic improvement; although will certainly make the Shakspeare bigots cry out. It is the sing of the piece with Juliet's death, the Friar in a short iloquy pointing the moral. Nothing can be more unamatic or more tiresome than the long recapitulation of

[1] *Werke*, xxxv. 379.

facts perfectly familiar to the audience, with which Shakspeare ends the piece.

This *Romeo and Juliet* was not only produced at Weimar but it kept the stage in Berlin until within the last few years. The Berlin critics on its original production were by no means favourably inclined to it—the dénouement, we learn from Zelter, especially displeased them. Did they resent being robbed of their ennui?

Enough has been said to characterise the attempt of Goethe and Schiller to create a German Drama; which attempt although its failure was inevitable, cannot be regarded without sympathy, were it only for the noble aim animating it. That aim was misdirected; but it was the error of lofty minds who saw *above* the exigencies of the age. They could not bring themselves to believe that the Drama, which they held to be so grand a form of Art, had ceased to be the lay-pulpit and had become a mere amusement.

With Schiller's death Goethe's active interest in the theatre ceased. The Obermarschall Graf von Edeling was adjoined to him, as acting superintendent, but without absolute power which still remained in Goethe's hands. This was towards the end of 1813. And in 1817 his son, August von Goethe was added to the direction. Thus was the theatre burdened with a Geheimrath, absolute but inactive, an Obermarschall and a court page. Nor were matters better behind the scenes. An intrigue had long been forming, under the direction of Caroline Jagemann, to force Goethe's resignation. Between the duke's mistress and the duke's friend there had never been a very pleasant feeling. She was naturally jealous of Goethe's power. As an actress under his direction, she must have had endless little causes of complaint. Had the poet been less firmly fixed in the duke's affections and interests this rivalry could not have endured so long. At last a crisis came.

There was at that period, 1817, a comedian named Karsten whose poodle performed the leading part in the well-known melodrame of *The Dog of Montargis* with such perfection that he carried the public everywhere with him, in Paris as in Germany. It may be imagined with what sorrowing scorn Goethe heard of this. The dramatic art to give place to a poodle! He, who detested dogs, to hear of a dog performing on all the stages of Germany with greater success than the best of actors! The occasion was not one to be lost. The

uke, whose fondness for dogs was as marked as Goethe's ersion to them, was craftily assailed, from various sides, to vite Karsten and his poodle to Weimar. When Goethe eard of this, he haughtily answered, "In our Theatre regula- ons stands: *no dogs admitted on the stage*"—and paid no ore attention to it. As the duke had already written to vite Karsten and his dog, Goethe's opposition was set down systematic arbitrariness, and people artfully "wondered" ow a prince's wishes could be opposed for such trifles. The og came. After the first rehearsal, Goethe declared that he ould have nothing more to do with a theatre on which a og was allowed to perform; and at once started for Jena. rinces ill brook opposition; and the duke, after all, was a uke. In an unworthy moment, he wrote the following, hich was posted in the theatre, and forwarded to Goethe:

"From the expressed opinions which have reached me, I ave come to the conviction that the Herr Geheimrath von oethe wishes to be released from his functions as Intendent, hich I hereby accord. KARL AUGUST."

A more offensive dismissal could scarcely have been sug- ested by malice. In the duke it was only a spurt of the nperious temper and coarseness which roughened his fine ualities. On Goethe the blow fell heavily. "Karl August ever understood me," he exclaimed, with a deep sigh. Such n insult to the greatest man of his age, coming from his old iend and brother in arms, who had been more friend than onarch to him during two-and-forty years, and who had eclared that one grave should hold their bodies—and all out a dog, behind which was a miserable green-room cabal! he thought of leaving Weimar for ever, and of accepting the agnificent offers made him from Vienna, pressed urgently on is mind.

But, to his credit be it said, the duke quickly became sensible his unworthy outbreak of temper, and wrote to Goethe in a ne of conciliation: "Dear Friend," he wrote, "From several xpressions thou hast let fall, I gather that thou wouldst be eased to be released from the vexations of theatrical manage- ent, but that thou wouldst willingly aid it by thy counsel and untenance, when, as will doubtless often be the case, thou art ecially appealed to by the manager. I gladly fall in with thy sire, thanking thee for the great good thou hast effected in this

troublesome business, begging thee to retain thy interest in it
artistic prosperity, and hoping that the release will better thy
health. I enclose an official letter notifying this change, and
with best wishes for your health, &c." The cloud passed over
but no entreaty could make Goethe resume the direction of the
theatre, and he withdrew his son also from his post in the
direction. He could pardon the hasty act and unconsidered
word of his friend; but he was prouder than the duke, and
held firmly to his resolution of having nothing to do with a
theatre which had once prostituted itself to the exhibition of a
clever poodle.

What a sarcasm, and in the sarcasm what a moral, lies in
this story. Art, which Weimar will not have, gives place to a
poodle!

CHAPTER VI

SCHILLER'S LAST YEARS

THE current of narrative in the preceding chapter has flowed
onwards into years and events from which we must now return.
Instead of the year 1817, we must recall the year 1800. Schiller
has just come to settle at Weimar, there to end his days in noble
work with his great friend. It may interest the reader to have
a glimpse of Goethe's daily routine; the more so, as such a
glimpse is not to be had from any published works.

He rose at seven, sometimes earlier, after a sound and pro-
longed sleep; for, like Thorwaldsen, he had a "talent for
sleeping," only surpassed by his talent for continuous work.
Till eleven he worked without interruption. A cup of choco-
late was then brought, and he resumed work till one. At two
he dined. This meal was the important meal of the day.
His appetite was immense. Even on the days when he com-
plained of not being hungry, he ate much more than most
men. Puddings, sweets, and cakes were always welcome.
He sat a long while over his wine, chatting gaily to some
friend or other (for he never dined alone), or to one of the
actors, whom he often had with him, after dinner, to read
over their parts, and to take his instructions. He was fond of
wine, and drank daily his two or three bottles.

Lest this statement should convey a false impression, I
hasten to recall to the reader's recollection the habits of our

thers in respect of drinking. It was no unusual thing to be "three bottle man" in those days in England, when the ree bottles were of Port or Burgundy; and Goethe, a Rhine- nder, accustomed from boyhood to wine, drank a wine hich his English contemporaries would have called water. he amount he drank never did more than exhilarate him; ever made him unfit for work or for society.[1]

Over his wine he sat some hours: no such thing as dessert as seen upon his table in those days: not even the customary offee after dinner. His mode of living was extremely simple; nd even when persons of very modest circumstances burned ax, two poor tallow candles were all that could be seen in his ooms. In the evening he went often to the theatre, and there is customary glass of punch was brought at six o'clock. When he was not at the theatre, he received friends at home. Between eight and nine a frugal supper was laid, but he never te anything except a little salad or preserves. By ten o'clock e was usually in bed.

Many visitors came to him. From the letters of Christiane o Meyer we gather that he must have exercised hospitality n a large scale, since about every month 50 lbs. of butter are rdered from Bremen, and the cases of wine have frequently o be renewed. It was the pleasure and the penalty of his ame, that all persons who came near Weimar made an effort o see him. Sometimes these visitors were persons of great nterest; oftener they were fatiguing bores, or men with pre- ensions more offensive than dulness. To those who pleased im he was inexpressibly charming; to the others he was tately, even to stiffness. While, therefore, we hear some peak of him with an enthusiasm such as genius alone can xcite: we hear others giving vent to the feelings of dis- ppointment, and even of offence, created by his manners. he stately minister exasperated those who went to see the mpassioned poet. As these visitors were frequently authors, was natural they should avenge their wounded self-love in

1 "For the last thousand years, the life of the Rhinelander is as it were eeped in wine; he has become like the good old wine-casks, tinted with the nous green. Wine is the creed of the Rhinelander in everything. As in ngland, in the days of Cromwell, the Royalists were known by the meat asties, the Papists by their raisin soup, the Atheists by their roast beef; so is e man of the Rhinegau known by his wine-flask. A jolly companion drinks s seven bottles every day, and with it grows as old as Methuselah, is seldom runk, and has at most the Bardolph mark of a red nose." LIEBIG: *Letters Chemistry*, Appendix.

criticisms and epigrams. To cite but one example among many: Bürger, whom Goethe had assisted in a pecuniary way, came to Weimar, and announced himself in this prepposterous style: "You are Goethe—I am Bürger," evidently believing he was thereby maintaining his own greatness, and offering a brotherly alliance. Goethe received him with the most diplomatic politeness, and the most diplomatic formality instead of plunging into discussions of poetry, he would be brought to talk of nothing but the condition of the Göttingen University, and the number of its students. Bürger went away furious, avenged this reception in an epigram, and related to all comers the experience he had had of the proud, cold, diplomatic Geheimrath. Others had the like experience to recount; and a public, ever greedy of scandal, ever willing to believe a great man is a small man, echoed these voices in swelling chorus. Something of offence lay in the very nature of Goethe's bearing, which was stiff, even to haughtiness. His appearance was so imposing, that Heine humorously relates how, on the occasion of his first interview with him, an elaborately prepared speech was entirely driven from his memory by the Jupiter-like presence, and he could only stammer forth "a remark on the excellence of the plums which grew on the road from Jena to Weimar." An imposing presence is irritating to mean natures; and Goethe might have gained universal applause, if, like Jean Paul, he had worn no cravat, and had let his hair hang loose upon his shoulders.

The mention of Jean Paul leads me to quote *his* impression of Goethe. "I went timidly to meet him. Every one had described him as cold to everything upon earth. Frau von Kalb said he no longer admires anything, not even himself. Every word is ice. Nothing but curiosities warm the fibres of his heart; so I asked Knebel if he could petrify me, or encrust me in some mineral spring that I might present myself as a statue or a fossil." How one hears the accents of village gossip in these sentences! To Weimarian ignorance Goethe's enthusiasm for statues and natural products seemed monstrous. "His house," Jean Paul continues, "or rather his palace, pleased me; it is the only one in Weimar in the Italian style with such a staircase! A Pantheon full of pictures and statues. Fresh anxiety oppressed me. At last the god entered, cold, monosyllabic. 'The French are drawing towards Paris,' said Knebel. 'Hm!' said the god. His face is massive and animated; his eye a ball of light! At last, as conversation

irned on art, he warmed, and was himself. His conversation as not so rich and flowing as Herder's, but penetrating, acute, nd calm. Finally, he read, or rather performed, an unublished poem, in which the flames of his heart burst through ie external crust of ice; so that he greeted my enthusiasm ith a pressure of the hand. He did it again as I took leave, nd urged me to call. By heaven! we shall love each other! Ie considers his poetic career closed. There is nothing comarable to his reading. It is like deep-toned thunder, blended ith whispering rain-drops."

Now let us hear what Jean Paul says of Schiller. "I went esterday to see the stony Schiller, from whom all strangers oring back as from a precipice. His form is wasted, yet everely powerful, and very angular. He is full of acumen, ut without love. His conversation is as excellent as his ritings." He never repeated this visit to Schiller, who oubtless quite subscribed to what Goethe wrote. "I am lad you have seen Richter. His love of truth, and his wish or self-improvement, have prepossessed me in his favour; ut the social man is a sort of theoretical man, and I doubt if e will approach us in a practical way."

If to pretenders and to *strangers* Goethe was cold and reellent, he was warm and attractive enough to all with whom e could sympathise. Brotherly to Schiller and Herder, he as fatherly in his loving discernment and protection to such en as Hegel, then an unknown teacher, and Voss, the son of ie translator of Homer.[1] He excited passionate attachments all who lived in his intimacy; and passionate hatred in any whom he would not admit to intimacy.

The opening of this century found Schiller active, and xious to stimulate the activity of his friend. But theories mpered the genius of Goethe; and various occupations disrbed it. He was not like Schiller a reflective, critical poet, ut a spontaneous instinctive poet. The consequence was, at Reflection not only retarded, but misled him into Symolism—the dark corner of that otherwise sunny palace of Art hich he has reared. He took up *Faust*, and wrote the classic termezzo of *Helena*. He was very busy with the theatre, d with science; and at the close of the year fell into a ngerous illness, which created much anxiety in the duke and e Weimar circle, and of which the Frau von Stein wrote in

[1] Note Voss's enthusiastic gratitude in his *Mittheilungen über Goethe und iller.*

that letter quoted p. 334. He recovered in a few weeks, and busied himself with the translation of *Theophrastus on Colour*, with *Faust*, and the *Natürliche Tochter*.

While the two chiefs of Literature were, in noble emulation and brotherly love, working together, each anxious for the success of the other, the nation divided itself into two parties disputing which was the greater poet of the two; as in Rome the artists dispute about Raphael and Michael Angelo. "It is difficult to appreciate one such genius," says Goethe of the two painters, "still more difficult to appreciate both. Hence people lighten the task by partisanship." The partisanship in the present case was fierce, and has continued. Instead of following Goethe's advice, and rejoicing that it had two such poets to boast of, the public has gone on crying up one at the expense of the other. Schiller himself with charming modesty confessed his inferiority; and in one of his letters to Körner he says: "Compared with Goethe I am but a poetical bungler —*gegen Goethe bin und bleib' ich ein poetischer Lump*." But the majority have placed him higher than his rival, at least higher in their hearts. Gervinus has remarked a curious contradiction in the fate of their works. Schiller, who wrote for men, is the favourite of women and youths; Goethe, who remained in perpetual youth, is only relished by men. The secret of this is, that Schiller had those passions and enthusiasms which Goethe wanted. Goethe told Eckermann that his works never could be popular; and, except the minor poems and *Faust*, there are none of his productions which equal the popularity of Schiller's.

To make an instrument of vengeance out of this partisanship, seemed an excellent idea to Kotzebue, who, after being crowned at Berlin, and saluted all over Germany with tributes of tears, now came to his native city of Weimar. He was invited to court, but he was not admitted into the select Goethe-Schiller circle; which irritated his vanity the more because a joke of Goethe's had been repeated to him. In Japan, besides the temporal court of the emperor, there is the spiritual court of the Dalai-Lama, which exercises a superior though secret influence. Goethe, alluding to this, said: "It is of no use to Kotzebue that he has been received at the temporal court of Japan, if he cannot get admitted to the spiritual court." Kotzebue thought he could destroy that court, and set up one of his own, of which Schiller should be the Dalai-Lama.

There was at this time a select little circle, composed of oethe, Schiller, Meyer, and several distinguished women, the ountess von Einsiedel, Fraülein von Imhoff, Frau von Wolgen, and others. The great preponderance of women in is circle gave a romantic tinge to the laws they imposed on emselves. On Kotzebue's arrival, one of Amalia's maids of onour used her utmost to obtain his admission; but Schiller nd Goethe, resolved on his exclusion, got a bye-law enacted, at "no member should have the power of introducing nother person, native or stranger, without the previously exressed unanimous consent of the other members. A certain oolness had sprung up between some of the members of the rcle, and Goethe, pestered by the iteration of the request at Kotzebue should be admitted, at last said, "Laws once cognised should be upheld; if not, it would be better to reak up the society altogether; which, perhaps, would be the ore advisable, as constancy is always difficult, if not tedious, ladies." The ladies were naturally enough irritated. Kotbue was ready to inflame them. Schiller had just gone to eipsic; and Kotzebue, taking advantage of this absence, rganised a fête to celebrate the coronation of Frederick chiller in the Stadthouse of Weimar. Scenes from *Don arlos*, the *Maid of Orleans*, and *Maria Stuart*, were to come rst. Goethe's favourite, the Countess von Einsiedel (now his e), was to represent the Joan of Arc; the Fräulein von nhoff the Queen of Scots; Sophie Moreau was to recite the ong of the Bell. Kotzebue was to appear as Father Thibaut the *Maid of Orleans* and as the Bell Founder, in which tter character he was to strike the mould of the bell (made pasteboard), and breaking it in pieces, disclose the bust of chiller, which was to be crowned by the ladies. The preparaons for this fête were eagerly carried forward. Weimar was a state of excitement. The cabal looked prosperous. The rincess Caroline had consented to be present. Schiller was ost pressingly invited, but said, in Goethe's house, a few ys before, "I shall send word I am ill." To this Goethe ade no reply. He heard of all the arrangements in perfect ence.

"It was thought," says Falk, to whom we owe this story, hat a coolness between the two great men would spring out this cabal; especially if the simple, unsuspecting Schiller ould fall into the toils laid for him. But they who suspected is, knew not the men. Fortunately, however, the whole

scheme fell to pieces. The directors of the Library refused t lend Schiller's bust; the Burgomaster refused to lend th Stadthouse. Rarely has so melancholy, so disastrous a da risen on the gay world of Weimar. To see the fairest, mos brilliant hopes thus crushed at a blow when so near their fulfil ment, what was it but to be wrecked in sight of port? Le the reader but imagine the now utterly useless expenditure c crape, gauze, ribbons, lace, beads, flowers which the fai creatures had made; not to mention the pasteboard for th bell, the canvas colours, brushes for the scenes, the wax candle for lighting, &c. Let him think of the still greater outlay o time and trouble requisite for the learning so many and such various parts; let him figure to himself a majestic Maid o Orleans, a captivating Queen of Scots, a lovely Agnes, s suddenly compelled to descend from the pinnacle of glory and in evil moment to lay aside the crown and sceptre, helm dress and ornament, and he will admit there never was fat more cruel."

Shortly after this—on the 13th June 1802—Goethe's son was confirmed. Herder officiated on the occasion; and thi brought him once more into that friendly relation with Goethe which of late had been cooled by his jealousy of Schiller Herder had been jealous of the growing friendship of Goeth and Merck; he was still more embittered by the growing friendship of Goethe and Schiller. He was bitter against Schiller's idol, Kant, and all Kant's admirers, declaring th new philosophy destructive of Christian morals. He wa growing old, and the bitterness of his youth was intensified b age and sickness. Schiller was in every way antagonistic t him; and the representation of *Wallenstein* "made him ill." Goethe, whose marvellous tolerance he had so sorely tried and who never ceased to admire his fine qualities, said, "on could not go to him without rejoicing in his mildness, on could not quit him without having been hurt by his bitterness." For some time Goethe was never mentioned in the Herde family, except in an almost inimical tone; and yet Herder' wife wrote to Knebel: "Let us thank God that Goethe sti lives. Weimar would be intolerable without him." The lived together in Jena for a few days, and parted never to se each other again. In December 1803, Herder was no more.

While discussing Physical Science with Ritter, Comparativ Anatomy with Loder, Optics with Himly, and making observa tions on the Moon, the plan of a great poem, *De Natur*

Rerum, rose in Goethe's mind, and like so many other plans, emained a plan. Intercourse with the great philologist Wolff ed him a willing student into Antiquity; and from Voss he ried to master the whole principles of Metre with the zeal of philologist. There is something very piquant in the idea f the greatest poet of his nation, the most musical master f verse in all possible forms, trying to acquire a theoretic nowledge of that which on instinct he did to perfection. It s characteristic of his new tendency to theorise on poetry.

Whoever reads the *Natürliche Tochter*, which was completed t this period, will probably attribute to this theorising tendency he absence of all life and vigour which makes it "marble mooth and marble cold." But although it appears marble old to us, it was the marble urn in which the poet had buried eal feelings; and Abeken relates that the actress who originally erformed the Heroine, told him how, on one occasion, when he was rehearsing the part in Goethe's room, he was so over-ome with emotion, that with tears in his eyes he bade her ause.[1] This may seem more strange than the fact that Schiller admired the work, and wrote to Humboldt: "The igh symbolism with which it is handled, so that all the crude naterial is neutralised, and everything becomes portion of an deal Whole, is truly wonderful. It is entirely Art, and thereby eaches the innermost Nature, through the power of truth." And Fichte—who, Varnhagen tells me, was with him in the ox at the Theatre when the play was performed at Berlin, nd was greatly moved by it—declared it to be Goethe's masterpiece. Rosenkrantz is amazed at the almost universal ondemnation of the work. "What pathos, what warmth, hat tragic pain!" he exclaims. Others would echo the ex-lamation—in irony. It seems to me that the very praise of Schiller and Fichte is a justification of the general verdict. A rama which is *so* praised, *i.e.* for its high symbolism, is a rama philosophers and critics may glorify, but which Art bjures. A drama, or any other poem, may carry with it naterial which admits of symbolical interpretation; but the oet who makes symbolism the substance and the purpose f his work, has mistaken his vocation. The whole Greek Drama has been *interpreted* into symbols by some modern cholars; but if the Greek Dramatists had written with any uch purpose as that detected by these interpreters, they would

[1] ABEKEN: *Goethe in den Jahren* 1771–75, p. 21.

never have survived to give interpreters the trouble. The *Iliad* has quite recently been once more interpreted into an allegory; Dante's *Divine Comedy* has been interpreted into an allegory; Shakspeare's plays have, by Ulrici, been interpreted into moral platitudes; the *Wahlverwandtschaften* has been interpreted into a "world history." Indeed symbolism being in its very nature *arbitrary*—the indication of a meaning not directly expressed, but arbitrarily thrust *under* the expression—there is no limit to the power of *interpretation*. It is, however, quite certain that the poets had not the meanings which their commentators find; and equally certain that if poets wrote for commentators they would never produce masterpieces.

In December 1803 Weimar had a visitor whose rank is high among its illustrious guests: Madame de Stael. Napoleon would not suffer her to remain in France; she was brought by Benjamin Constant to the German Athens, that she might see and know something of the men her work *De l'Allemagne* was to reveal to her countrymen. It is easy to ridicule Madame de Stael; to call her, as Heine does, "a whirlwind in petticoats," and a "Sultana of mind." But Germans should be grateful to her for that book, which still remains one of the best books written about Germany; and the lover of letters will not forget that her genius has, in various departments of literature, rendered for ever illustrious the power of the womanly intellect. Goethe and Schiller, whom she stormed with cannonades of talk, spoke of her intellect with great admiration. Of all living creatures he had seen, Schiller said, she was "the most talkative, the most combative, the most gesticulative;" but she was "also the most cultivated, and the most gifted." The contrast between her French culture and his German culture, and the difficulty he had in expressing himself in French, did not prevent his being much interested. In the sketch of her he sent to Goethe it is well said: "She insists on explaining everything; understanding everything; measuring everything. She admits of no Darkness; nothing Incommensurable; and where her torch throws no light, there nothing can exist. Hence her horror for the Ideal Philosophy, which she thinks leads to mysticism and superstition. For what we call poetry she has no sense; she can only appreciate what is passionate, rhetorical, universal. She does not prize what is false, but does not always perceive what is true."

The Duchess Amalia was enchanted with her, and the duke wrote to Goethe, who was at Jena, begging him to come over,

nd be seen by her; which Goethe very positively declined. Ie said, if she wished very much to see him, and would come o Jena, she should be very heartily welcomed; a comfortable odging and a bourgeoise table would be offered her, and every ay they could have some hours together when his business as over; but he could not undertake to go to court, and nto society; he did not feel himself strong enough. In the eginning of 1804, however, he came to Weimar, and there e made her acquaintance; that is to say, he received her in is own house, at first *tête-à-tête*, and afterwards in small circles f friends.

Except when she managed to animate him by her paradoxes r wit, he was cold and formal to her, even more so than to ther remarkable people; and he has told us the reason. Rousseau had been drawn into a correspondence with two vomen, who addressed themselves to him as admirers; he ad shown himself in this correspondence by no means to his dvantage, now (1803) that the letters appeared in print.[1] Goethe had heard or read of this correspondence; and Madame de Stael had frankly told him she intended to print is conversation. This was enough to make him ill at ease in er society; and although she said he was "un homme d'un sprit prodigieux en conversation . . . quand on le sait faire arler il est admirable," she never saw the real, but a factitious Goethe. By dint of provocation—and champagne—she anaged to make him talk brilliantly; she never got him o talk to her seriously. On the 29th of February she left Veimar, to the great relief both of Goethe and Schiller.[2]

Nothing calls for notice during the rest of this year, except he translation of an unpublished work by Diderot, *Rameau's Nephew*, and the commencement of the admirable work on *Winckelmann and his Age*. The beginning of 1805 found him roubled with a presentiment that either he or Schiller would ie in this year. Both were dangerously ill. Christiane, riting to her friend Nicolaus Meyer, says, that for the last hree months the Geheimrath has scarcely had a day's health, nd at times it seemed as if he must die. It was a touching

[1] The correspondence alluded to can be no other than that of Rousseau ith Madame de la Tour-Franqueville and her friend, whose name is still nknown; it is one of the most interesting among the many interesting orrespondences of women with celebrated men. A charming notice of it ay be found in STE.-BEUVE'S *Causeries du Lundi*, vol. ii.

[2] In the *Tag und Jahres Hefte*, 1804 (*Werke*, xxvii. p. 143), the reader ill find Goethe's account of Madame de Stael and her relation to him.

scene when Schiller, a little recovered from his last attack, entered the sick room of his friend. They walked up to each other, and, without speaking a word, expressed their joy at meeting in a long and manly kiss. Both hoped with the return of spring for return of health and power. Schiller meanwhile was translating the *Phèdre* of Racine; Goethe was translating the *Rameau's Nephew*, and writing the history of the *Farbenlehre*.

The spring was coming, but on its blossoms Schiller's eyes were not to rest. On the 30th of April the friends parted for the last time. Schiller was going to the theatre. Goethe, too unwell to accompany him, said good-bye at the door of Schiller's house. During Schiller's illness Goethe was much depressed. Voss found him once pacing up and down his garden, crying by himself. He mastered his emotion as Voss told him of Schiller's state, and only said, "Fate is pitiless, and man but little."

It really seemed as if the two friends were to be united in the grave as they had been in life. Goethe grew worse. From Schiller, life was fast ebbing. On the 8th of May he was given over. "His sleep that night was disturbed; his mind again wandered; with the morning he had lost all consciousness. He spoke incoherently and chiefly in Latin. His last drink was champagne. Towards three in the afternoon came on the last exhaustion; the breath began to fail. Towards four he would have called for naphtha, but the last syllable died upon his lips; finding himself speechless, he motioned that he wished to write something; but his hand could only trace three letters, in which was yet recognisable the distinct character of his writing. His wife knelt by his side; he pressed her hand. His sister-in-law stood with the physician at the foot of the bed, applying warm cushions to the cold feet. Suddenly a sort of electric shock came over his countenance; the head fell back; the deepest calm settled on his face. His features were as those of one in a soft sleep.

"The news of Schiller's death soon spread through Weimar. The theatre was closed; men gathered into groups. Each felt as if he had lost his dearest friend. To Goethe, enfeebled himself by long illness, and again stricken by some relapse, no one had the courage to mention the death of his beloved rival. When the tidings came to Henry Meyer, who was with him, Meyer left the house abruptly lest his grief might escape him. No one else had courage to break the intelligence.

Goethe perceived that the members of his household seemed embarrassed and anxious to avoid him. He divined something of the fact, and said at last, 'I see—Schiller must be very ill.' That night they overheard him—the serene man who seemed almost above human affection, who disdained to reveal to others whatever grief he felt when his son died—they overheard Goethe weep! In the morning he said to a friend, 'Is it not true that Schiller was very ill yesterday?' The friend (it was a woman) sobbed. 'He is dead,' said Goethe faintly. 'You have said it,' was the answer. 'He is dead,' repeated Goethe, and covered his face with hands."[1]

"The half of my existence is gone from me," he wrote to Zelter. His first thoughts were to continue the *Demetrius* in the spirit in which Schiller had planned it, so that Schiller's mind might still be with him, still working at his side. But the effort was vain. He could do nothing. "My diary," he says, "is a blank at this period; the white pages intimate the blank in my existence. In those days I took no interest in anything."

CHAPTER VII

FAUST

ALTHOUGH the first part of *Faust* was not published until 1806, it was already completed before Schiller's death, and may therefore be fitly noticed in this place. For more than thirty years had the work been growing in its author's mind, and although its precise chronology is not ascertainable, yet an approximation is possible which will not be without service to the student.

The Faust-fable was familiar to Goethe as a child. In Strasburg, during 1770–71, he conceived the idea of fusing his personal experience into the mould of the old legend; but he wrote nothing of the work until 1774–5, when the ballad of the King of Thule, the first monologue, and the first scene with Wagner, were written; and during his love affair with Lili, he sketched Gretchen's catastrophe, the scene in the street, the scene in Gretchen's bedroom, the scenes between Faust and Mephisto during the walk, and in the street, and

[1] BULWER'S *Life of Schiller.*

the garden scene. In his Swiss journey, he sketched the first interview with Mephisto, and the compact; also the scene before the city gates, the plan of Helena (subsequently much modified), the scene between the student and Mephisto, and Auerbach's cellar. When in Italy, he read over the old manuscript, and wrote the scenes of the witches' kitchen and the cathedral; also the monologue in the forest. In 1797, *the whole was remodelled.* Then were added the two Prologues; the Walpurgis night, and the dedication. In 1801, he completed it, as it now stands, retouching it perhaps in 1806, when it was published. Let us now with some carefulness examine this child of so much care.

The cock in Esop scratched a pearl into the light of day, and declared that to him it was less valuable than a grain of millet seed. The pearl is only a pearl to him who knows its value. And so it is with fine subjects: they are only fine in the hands of great artists. Where the requisite power exists, a happy subject is a fortune; without that power, it only serves to place the artist's incompetence in broader light. Mediocre poets have tried their prentice hands at Faust; poets of undeniable genius have tried to master it; Goethe alone has seen in it the subject to which his genius was fully adequate; and has produced from it the greatest poem of modern times:

> "An Orphic tale indeed,—
> A tale divine, of high and passionate thoughts,
> To their own music chaunted."

Although genius can find material in the trifles which ordinary minds pass heedlessly by, it is only a very few subjects which permit the full display of genius. The peculiarities of a man's organisation and education invest certain subjects with a charm and a significance. Such was *Der Freischütz* for Weber; the maternity of the Madonna for Raphael; *Faust* for Goethe. Thus it is that a fine subject becomes the marble out of which a lasting monument is carved.

Quite beyond my purpose, and my limits, would be any account of the various materials, historical and æsthetical, which German literature has gathered into one vast section on Faust, and the Faust legend. There is not a single detail which has not exercised the industry and ingenuity of commentators; so that the curious need complain of no lack of informants. English readers will find in the translations by Hayward and Blackie a reasonable amount of such informa-

tion pleasantly given; German readers will only have the embarrassment of a choice. Far more important than all learned apparatus, is the attempt to place ourselves at the right point of view for studying and enjoying this wondrous poem, the popularity of which is almost unexampled. It appeals to all minds with the irresistible fascination of an eternal problem, and with the charm of endless variety. It has every element: wit, pathos, wisdom, farce, mystery, melody, reverence, doubt, magic, and irony; not a chord of the lyre is unstrung, not a fibre of the heart untouched. Students earnestly wrestling with doubt, striving to solve the solemn riddles of life, feel their pulses strangely agitated by this poem; and not students alone, but as Heine, with allowable exaggeration, says, every billiard-marker in Germany puzzles himself over it. In *Faust* we see, as in a mirror, the eternal problem of our intellectual existence; and, beside it, varied lineaments of our social existence. It is at once a problem and a picture. Therein lies its fascination. The problem embraces questions of vital importance; the picture represents opinions, sentiments, classes, moving on the stage of life. The great problem is stated in all its nudity; the picture is painted in all its variety.

This twofold nature of the work explains its popularity; and, what is more to our purpose, gives the clue to its secret of composition; a clue which all the critics I am acquainted with have overlooked; and although I cannot but feel that considerable suspicion must attach itself to any opinion claiming novelty on so old a subject, I hope the contents of this chapter will furnish sufficient evidence to justify its acceptance. The conviction first arose in my mind as the result of an inquiry into the causes of the popularity of *Hamlet*. The two works are so allied, and so associated together in every mind, that the criticism of the one will be certain to throw light on the other.

Hamlet, in spite of a prejudice current in certain circles that if now produced for the first time it would fail, is the most popular play in our language. It *amuses* thousands annually, and it stimulates the minds of millions. Performed in barns and minor theatres oftener than in Theatres Royal, it is always and everywhere attractive. The lowest and most ignorant audiences delight in it. The source of the delight is twofold: First, its reach of thought on topics the most profound; for the dullest soul can *feel* a grandeur which it cannot *understand*,

and will listen with hushed awe to the outpourings of a great meditative mind obstinately questioning fate; Secondly, its wondrous dramatic variety. Only consider for a moment the striking effects it has in the Ghost; the tyrant murderer; the terrible adulterous queen; the melancholy hero, doomed to so awful a fate; the poor Ophelia, broken-hearted and dying in madness; the play within a play, entrapping the conscience of the King; the ghastly mirth of gravediggers; the funeral of Ophelia interrupted by a quarrel over her grave betwixt her brother and her lover; and finally, the hurried bloody dénouement. Such are the figures woven in the tapestry by passion and poetry. Add thereto the absorbing fascination of profound thoughts. It may indeed be called the tragedy of thought, for there is as much reflection as action in it; but the reflection itself is made dramatic, and hurries the breathless audience along, with an interest which knows no pause. Strange it is to notice in this work the indissoluble union of refinement with horrors, of reflection with tumult, of high and delicate poetry with broad, palpable, theatrical effects. The machinery is a machinery of horrors, physical and mental: ghostly apparitions—hideous revelations of incestuous adultery and murder—madness—Polonius killed like a rat while listening behind the arras—gravediggers casting skulls upon the stage and desecrating the churchyard with their mirth—these and other horrors form the machinery by which moves the highest, the grandest, and the most philosophic of tragedies.

It is not difficult to see how a work so various should become so popular. *Faust*, which rivals it in popularity, rivals it also in prodigality. Almost every typical aspect of life is touched upon; almost every subject of interest finds an expression in almost every variety of rhythm. It gains a large audience because it appeals to a large audience:

> Die Mass könnt ihr nur durch Masse zwingen,
> Ein jeder sucht sich endlich selbst was aus.
> Wer Vieles bringt wird manchem Etwas bringen,
> Und jeder geht zufrieden aus dem Haus.[1]

Critics usually devote their whole attention to an exposition of the Idea of Faust; and it seems to me that in this laborious

[1] The mass can be compelled by mass alone,
Each one at length seeks out what is his own.
Bring much, and every one is sure to find
From out your nosegay something to his mind.
BLACKIE.

search after a remote explanation they have overlooked the more obvious and natural explanation furnished by the work itself. The reader who has followed me thus far will be aware that I have little sympathy with that Philosophy of Art which consists in translating Art into Philosophy, and that I trouble myself, and him, very little with "considerations on the Idea." Experience tells me that the Artists themselves had quite other objects in view than that of developing an Idea; and experience further says that the Artist's public is by no means primarily anxious about the Idea, but leaves that entirely to the critics,—who cannot agree among themselves. In studying a work of Art, we should proceed as in studying a work of nature: after delighting in the effect, we should try to ascertain what are the *means* by which the effect is produced, and not at all what is the Idea lying behind the means. If in dissecting an animal we get clear conceptions of the mechanism by which certain functions are performed, we do not derive any increase of real knowledge from being told that the functions are the final causes of the mechanism; while, on the other hand, if an *a priori* conception of purpose is made to do the work of actual inspection of the mechanism, we find ourselves in a swamp of conjectural metaphysics where no dry land is to be found.

The Theatre Prologue. This opening of the work shows a strolling company of Players about to exhibit themselves in the market-place, to please the motley crowd with some rude image of the Comedy and Tragedy of Life. The personages are three: The Manager, the Poet, and the Merry Andrew: three types representing the question of Dramatic Art in reference to poets and the public. The Manager opposes his hard practical sense to the vague yearnings and unworldly aspirings of the Poet; he thinks of receipts, the poet thinks of fame. But here, as ever, hard practical sense is not the best judge; the arbitration of a third is needed, and we have it in the Merry Andrew, who corrects both disputants by looking to the real issue, namely, the *amusement of the public.* When the poet flies off in declamations about Posterity, this wise and merry arbiter slily asks: Who then is to amuse the present? A question we feel repeatedly tempted to ask those lofty writers who, despising a success they have striven in vain to achieve, throw themselves with greater confidence on the Future; as if the Future in *its* turn would not also be a Present, having its despisers and its Jeremiahs.

The Theatre Prologue, brief though it is, indicates the whole question of poets, managers, and public. It is the wisest word yet uttered on the topic, and seems as fresh and applicable as if written yesterday. No consideration of importance is omitted, and there are no superfluities. Every line is thrown off with the utmost ease, and with the perfect clearness of perfect strength. One might say without exaggeration that the mastery of genius is as distinctly traceable in these easy felicitous touches, as in any other part of the work; for it is perhaps in the treatment of such trifles that power is most decisively seen: inferior writers always overdo or underdo such things; they are inflated or flat. All bodies at a certain degree of heat become luminous, and in the exaltation of passion even an inferior mind will have inspirations of felicitous thought; but, reduced to normal temperatures, that which before was luminous becomes opaque, and the inferior mind being neither exalted by passion nor moved towards new issues by the pressure of crowding thoughts, exhibits its normal strength. And that is why the paradox is true, of real mastery being most clearly discernible in trifles. When the wind is furiously sweeping the surface, we cannot distinguish the shallowest from the deepest stream; it is only when the winds are at rest that we can see to the bottom of the shallow stream and perceive the deep stream to be beyond our fathom.

We may still call upon the wisdom of this Prologue. The Manager wants to know how best to attract the public:

> Sie sitzen schon, mit hohen Augenbraunen
> Gelassen da, und möchten gern erstaunen.
> Ich weiss wie man den Geist des Volks versöhnt;
> Doch so verlegen bin ich nie gewesen;
> Zwar sind sie an das Beste nichte gewöhnt
> *Allein sie haben schrecklich viel gelesen.*[1]

The Poet, who never drifts towards Utilitarianism, replies in rhapsodies about his Art; whereupon the Merry Andrew bids

> [1] With eyebrows arch'd already they sit there,
> And gape for something new to make them stare.
> I know how to conciliate the mob,
> But ne'er yet felt it such a ticklish job:
> 'Tis true what they have read is not the best,
> But that they much have read must be confessed.
> BLACKIE'S *Translation.*

I shall generally follow this translation; but the passage just cited is not of the usual excellence. The last couplet of the original is one of those couplets which, in their ease, familiarity, and felicity, are the despair of translators.

him prove himself a master of his Art, by *amusing* the public.

> Let Fancy with her many-sounding chorus,
> Reason, Sense, Feeling, Passion, move before us;
> But mark you well! a spice of Folly too.

The Manager insists upon "incidents" above all things:

> They come to see, you must engage their eyes.

And he adds, with true managerial instinct,

> You give a piece—give it at once in pieces!
> In vain into an artful whole you glue it,—
> The public, in the long run, will undo it.

So the dispute runs on, till the Manager settles it by resolving to give a grand and motley spectacle, "From heaven to earth, and thence thro' earth to hell." This sentence gives us the clue to the composition of the work; a clue which has usually been taken only as a guide through the mental labyrinth, through the phases of the psychological problem, instead of through that, and *also* through the scenes of life represented.

The *Prologue in Heaven* succeeds. In many quarters this Prologue has been strangely misunderstood. It has been called a parody of the Book of Job, and censured as a parody. It has been stigmatised as irrelevant and irreverent, out of keeping with the rest, and gratuitously blasphemous. Some translators have omitted it "as unfit for publication." Coleridge debated with himself, "whether it became his moral character to render into English, and so far certainly to lend his countenance to, language much of which he thought vulgar, licentious, and blasphemous."[1] And I will confess that my first impression was strongly against it; an impression which was only removed by considering the legendary nature of the poem, and the legendary style adopted. It is only organic analysis which can truly seize the meaning of organic elements; so long as we judge an organism *ab extra*, according to the Idea, or according to *our* Ideas, and not according to *its* nature, we shall never rightly understand structure and function; and this is as true of poems as of animals. Madame de Stael admirably says of the whole work, "il serait véritablement trop naïf de supposer qu'un tel homme ne sache pas toutes les fautes de goût qu'on peut reprocher à sa pièce;

[1] *Table Talk*, vol. ii. p. 118.

mais il est curieux de connaître les motifs qui l'ont détermin à les y laisser, ou plutôt à les y mettre." And in trying t understand what were the motives which induced Goethe t introduce this prologue, and to treat it in this style, we mus dismiss at once the supposition that he meant to be blas phemous, and the supposition that he could not have been a grave and decorous as Klopstock, had he deemed it fitting Let us look a little closer.

The wager between Mephistopheles and the Deity was par and parcel of the Legend. In adopting the Legend, Goeth could not well omit this part, and his treatment of it is in th true mediæval style, as all who are familiar with mediæva legends, and especially those who are familiar with the Miracle plays of Europe, will recognise at once. In these Miracle plays we are startled by the coarsest buffoonery, and what t modern ears sounds like blasphemy, side by side with th most serious lessons; things the most sacred are dragge through the dirt of popular wit; persons the most sacred ar made the subject of jests and stories which would send a shudder through the pious reader of our times. As a specime of the lengths to which this jesting spirit went, in the works o priests, performed by priests, and used for religious instruction the following bit of buffoonery may be cited. In one of th plays God the Father is seen sleeping on his throne during th Crucifixion. An Angel appears to him; and this dialogu takes place:

"*Angel.* Eternal Father, you are doing what is not right, and will cove yourself with shame. Your much beloved son is just dead, and you sleep lik a drunkard.
"*God the Father.* Is he then dead?
"*Angel.* Ay, that he is.
"*God the Father.* Devil take me if I knew anything about it."[1]

Nothing is more certain than that such things were no intended as blasphemous; they were the naïve representation which uncultured minds naïvely accepted. In treating mediæval legend, Goethe therefore gave it something of th

[1] Quoted in SCHERR: *Geschichte der Deutschen Cultur*, p. 171. In the earl forms of the drama, I remember nothing so irreverent as this passage, bu many of extreme coarseness and ignoble buffoonery. Nor is this strang perversion of the religious ceremony unexampled. In Greece, where th Drama was a religious festival, the same comic license flourished unrestricted the very stage trodden by the Eumenides and solemnised by the presence o the gods, was, in the after-piece, the scene of gross buffoonery, in which th gods were buffoons.

mediæval colouring—a faint tint, just enough to effect his purpose, when the real colour would have been an offence in adopting the idea of the Prologue he followed the old puppet-play of *Faust*, of which there are many versions.[1] An inferior artist would assuredly have made this Prologue as grand and metaphysical as possible. Goethe intentionally made it naïve. We cannot suppose him unable to treat it otherwise had he so willed; but he did not will it so. He was led to write this scene by his study of the older literature, and the source of its inspiration is traceable in this naïveté.[2] Consider the whole tenor of the work, and see how great a want of keeping there would have been in a prologue which represented Mephistopheles and the Deity according to modern conceptions of severe propriety, when the rest of the work was created according to legendary belief; scenes like that with the Poodle, the Walpurgis Night, and the Witches' Kitchen, would have been in open contradiction with a Prologue in the modern spirit. It seems to me that the Prologue is just what it should be: poetical, with a touch of mediæval colouring. It strikes the key note; it opens the world of wonder and legendary belief, wherein you are to see transacted the great and mystic drama of life; it is the threshold at which you are bidden to lay aside your garments soiled with the dust of the work-day world; fairy garments are given in exchange, and you enter a new region, where a drama is acted, dream-like in form, in spirit terribly real.

Then, again, the language put into the month of Mephistopheles,—which is so irreverent as to make the unreflecting reader regard the whole Prologue as blasphemous,—is it not strictly in keeping? Here we see the "spirit that denies" so utterly and essentially irreverent, that even in the presence of the Creator, he feels no awe; the grander emotions are not excitable within his soul; and, like all his species, he will not believe that others feel such emotions: "Pardon me," he says, "I cannot utter fine phrases." To such spirits, all grandeur of phrase is grandiloquence. Mephisto is not a hypocrite: he cannot pay even *that* homage to virtue. He is a sceptic, pure and simple. In the presence of the Lord he demeans himself such as we may imagine a "fast" young man behaving when introduced into the presence of a Goethe, without brains

[1] See MAGNIN: *Histoire des Marionnettes*, p. 325.

[2] It was probably this feeling of its naïveté which made him say that it ought be translated into the French of Marot.

enough to be aware of his own insignificance. He offers to lay a wager just as the fast youth would offer to "back" an opinion of his own; and the brief soliloquy in which he expresses his feelings on the result of the interview has a levity and a tinge of sarcasm intensely devilish.

There are, it will be observed, two Prologues: one on the Stage, the other in Heaven. The reason of this I take to lie in the twofold nature of the poem, in the two leading subjects to be worked out. The world and the world's ways are to be depicted; the individual soul and its struggles are to be portrayed. For the former we have the theatre-prologue, because "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." For the latter we have the prologue in heaven because heaven is the centre and the goal of all struggles, doubts and reverence; and because Faust is struggling heavenward:

> Nicht irdisch ist des Thoren Trank noch Speise,
> Ihn treibt die Gährung in die Ferne.

"This fool's meat and drink are not earthly," says Mephisto. "The ferment of his spirit impels him towards the far ever distant."

There is also another organic necessity for these two prologues: in the first we see the Manager and his Poet moving the puppets of the scene; in the second, we see the Lord and Mephistopheles moving the puppets of the drama within a drama. It is from strolling players that the cause of the whole representation proceeds; it is from heaven that the drama of the temptation issues. These two prologues were both written in the same year, and long after the conception of the Faust-legend had taken shape in Goethe's mind. They were after-thoughts, and it becomes us to inquire what purpose they were intended to subserve. I believe that in his first conception he only intended the *individual* element of the work to be developed; and that the world-picture was an after-thought, the product of reflection. In this subsequent conception the *Second Part* was more or less forecast; and the two prologues are introductory to the whole poem in this new conception.

But to proceed with our analysis. The first scene is that of *Faust in his study*. The drama here begins. Faust sits amid his books and instruments, vain appliances of vain inquiry. Pale, and worn with midnight toil, he feels his efforts have been vain, feels that science is impotent, feels that no answer

o his questions can be extorted by mortal wisdom, and gives imself to magic.

That I, with bitter-sweating brow,
No more may teach what I do not know;
That I with piercing ken may see
The world's in-dwelling energy,
The hidden seeds of life explore,
And deal in words and forms no more.

he moon, which shines in upon him, recalls him to a sense f the Life without, which he has neglected in his study of archments and old bones: *Und fragst du noch warum dein Herz*, he exclaims in the well-known lines, and opens the agic book to summon a spirit to his aid:

He seizes the book, and pronounces with a mysterious air the sign of the Spirit. A red flame darts forth, and the Spirit appears in the flame.)

Spirit. Who calls me?
Faust (*turning away*). Vision of affright!
Spirit. Thou hast with mighty spells invoked me,
And to obey thy call provoked me,
And now—
Faust. Hence from my sight!
Spirit. Thy panting prayer besought my form to view,
To hear my voice, and know my semblance too;
Now bending from my lofty sphere to please thee,
Here am I!—ha! what shuddering terrors seize thee,
And overpower thee quite! where now is gone
The soul's proud call? the breast that scorn'd to own
Earth's thrall, a world in itself created,
And bore and cherish'd? with its fellow sated
That swell'd with throbbing joy to leave its sphere
And vie with spirits, their exalted peer.
Where art thou, Faust? whose invocation rung
Upon mine ear, whose powers all round me clung?
Art *thou* that Faust? whom melts my breath away,
Trembling ev'n to the life-depths of thy frame,
Now shrunk into a piteous worm of clay!
Faust. Shall I then yield to thee, thou thing of flame?
I am thy peer, am Faust, am still the same!
Spirit. Where life's floods flow,
And its tempests rave,
Up and down I wave,
Flit I to and fro:
Birth and the grave,
Life's secret glow,
A changing motion,
A boundless ocean,
Whose waters heave
Eternally;
Thus on the noisy loom of Time I weave
The living mantle of the Deity.
Faust. Thou who round the wide world wendest,
Thou busy sprite, how near I feel to thee!

Spirit. Thou'rt like the spirit whom thou comprehendest,
Not me! *(vanishes.)*
Faust (astounded). Not thee!
Whom, then?
I, image of the Godhead,
Not like thee! *(knocking is heard.)*
Oh, death!—'tis Wagner's knock—he comes to break
The charm that bound me while the Spirit spake!
Thus my supremest bliss ends in delusion
Marr'd by a sneaking pedant-slave's intrusion!

How fine is this transition, the breaking in of prose reality upon the visions of the poet,—the entrance of Wagner, who hearing voices, fancied Faust was declaiming from a Greek drama, and comes to profit by the declamation. Wagner is a type of the Philister, and pedant; he sacrifices himself to Books as Faust does to Knowledge. He adores the letter: The dust of folios is his element; parchment is the source of his inspiration.

Left once more to himself, Faust continues his sad soliloquy of despair. The thoughts, and the music in which they are uttered, must be sought in the original, no translation can be adequate. He resolves to die; and seizing the phial which contains the poison, says:—

I look on thee, and soothed is my heart's pain;
I grasp thee, straight is lulled my racking brain,
And wave by wave my soul's flood ebbs away.
I see the ocean wide before me rise,
And at my feet her sparkling mirror lies;
To brighter shores invites a brighter day.

He raises the cup to his lips, when suddenly a sound of bells is heard, accompanied by the distant singing of the choir. It is Easter. And with these solemn sounds are borne the memories of his early youth, awaking the feelings of early devotion. Life retains him upon earth; Memory vanquishes despair.

This opening scene was *suggested* by the old puppet-play in which Faust appears, surrounded with compasses, spheres, and cabalistic instruments, wavering between theology, the divine science, philosophy, the human science, and magic, the infernal science. But Goethe has enriched the suggestion from his own wealth of thought and experience.

The scene before the gate. We quit the gloomy study, and the solitary struggles of the individual, to breathe the fresh air, and contemplate everyday life, and everyday joyousness

It is Sunday; students and maid-servants, soldiers and shopkeepers, are thronging out of the city gates on their way to various suburban beerhouses which line the high road. Clouds of dust and smoke accompany the throng; joyous laughter, incipient flirtations, merry song, and eager debates, give us glimpses of the common world. This truly German picture is wonderfully painted, and its place in the poem is significant, showing how life is accepted by the common mind, in contrast with the previous scene which showed life pressing on the student, demanding from him an interpretation of its solemn significance. Faust has wasted his days in questioning; the people spend theirs in frivolous pursuits, or sensual enjoyment; the great riddle of the world never troubles them, for to them the world is a familiarity and no mystery. They are more anxious about good tobacco and frothy beer, about whether this one will dance with that one, and about the new official dignitaries, than about all that the heavens above or earth beneath can have of mystery. Upon this scene Faust, the struggler, and Wagner, the pedant, come to gaze. It affects Faust deeply, and makes him feel how much wiser these simple people are than he is—for they enjoy.

> Hier ist des Volkes wahrer Himmel
> Zufrieden jauchzet gross und Klein:
> *Hier bin ich Mensch, hier darf ich's seyn.*

Yes, here he feels himself a man, one of the common brotherhood, for here he yearns after the enjoyments which he sees them pursuing. But Wagner, true pedant, feels nothing of the kind; he is only there because he wishes to be with Faust. He is one of those who, in the presence of Niagara, would vex you with questions about arrow-headed inscriptions, and in the tumult of a village festival would discuss the origin of the Pelasgi.

The people crowd round Faust, paying him the reverence always paid by the illiterate to the "scholar." Wagner sees it with envy; Faust feels it to be a mockery. Reverence to him, who feels profoundly his own insignificance! He seats himself upon a stone, and, gazing on the setting sun, pours forth melancholy reflections on the worthlessness of life, and the vanity of his struggles. The old peasant has recalled to him the scenes of his youth, when while the fever raged he was always tending the sick, and saved so many lives, "helping,

helped by the Father of Good." Seated on that stone, th visions of his youth come back upon his mind:

> Here sat I oft, plunged in deep thought, alone,
> And wore me out with fasting and with prayer.
> Rich then in hope, in faith then strong,
> With tears and sobs my hands I wrung,
> And weened the end of that dire pest,
> From the will of Heaven to rest.

His means were unholy.

> Here was the medicine, and the patient died,
> But no one questioned—who survived?
> And thus have we, with drugs more curst than hell,
> Within these vales, these mountains here,
> Raged than the very pest more fell!
> I have myself to thousands poisons given;
> They pin'd away, and I must live to hear
> Men for the reckless murd'rers thanking heaven!

Wagner does not understand such scruples. He is no troubled, like Faust, with a consciousness of a double nature The Poodle appears, to interrupt their dialogue, and Wagner with characteristic stupidity, sees nothing but a *Poodle* in th apparition:

> Ich sah ihn lange schon, nicht wichtig schien er mir.

The spiritual insight of Faust is more discerning. They qui the scene, the Poodle following.

Faust's Study. The student and the poodle enter. Th thoughts of Faust are solemn; this makes the poodle restless this restlessness becomes greater and greater as Faust begin to translate the Bible—an act which is enough to agitate th best-disposed devil. A bit of incantation follows, and Mephis topheles appears. I must not linger over the details of th scene, tempting as they are, but come to the compact betwee Faust and Mephistopheles. The state of mind which induce this compact has been artfully prepared. Faust has been le to despair of attaining the high ambition of his life; he ha seen the folly of his struggles; seen that Knowledge is will-o'-the-wisp to which he has sacrificed Happiness. H now pines for Happiness, though he disbelieves in it as he dis believes in Knowledge. In utter scepticism he consents t sell his soul *if* ever he shall realise Happiness. What pro found sadness is implied in the compact, that if ever he sha

y to the passing moment, "Stay, thou art fair," he is willing perish eternally!

This scene of the compact has also its origin in the old uppet play, and very curious is it to trace how the old hints re developed by Goethe. In the Augsburg version there is ne condition among those stipulated by Mephistopheles to ie effect that Faust shall never again ascend the theological hair. "But what will the public say?" asks Faust. "Leave iat to me," Mephisto replies; "I will take your place; and elieve me I shall add to the reputation you have gained in iblical learning."[1] Had Goethe known this version, he ould probably not have omitted such a sarcastic touch.

I must pass over the inimitable scene which follows between Iephisto and the young Student newly arrived at the Univer-ty, with boundless desire for knowledge. Every line is a arcasm, or a touch of wisdom. The *position* of this scene in s relation to the whole, deserves, however, a remark. What the scene, but a withering satire on every branch of Know-dge? and where does it occur, but precisely at that juncture hen Knowledge has by the hero been renounced, when ooks are closed for ever, and Life is to be enjoyed? Thus ie words of Mephisto, that Theory is a greybeard, and Life a esh tree, green and golden—

> Grau, theurer Freund, ist alle Theorie,
> Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum—

repare us for the utter abjuration of Theory, and the eager ursuit of Enjoyment. This leads to

Auerbach's Cellar, and its scene of Aristophanic buffoonery. he cellar reeks with the fumes of bad wine and stale tobacco; s blackened arches ring with the sound of boisterous mirth id noisy songs. The sots display themselves in all their ottishness. And *this* is one form of human enjoyment! A ing still unhappily to be seen in every city of Europe. aust looks on with a sort of bewildered disgust, which soon earies him; and then away! away! to the other scene as ul, as hideous—to—

The Witches' Kitchen. Here Faust passes from bestiality to estiality, from material grossness to spiritual grossness, from e impurity of sots to the impurity of witches. In this den of rcery he drinks of the witch's potion, which will make him,

[1] *Das Closter*, vol. v. p. 326.

as Mephisto says, see a Helen in the first woman he meet Rejuvenescence is accompanied by desires hitherto unknow to him; he is young, and young passions hurry him into th "roaring flood of time."

Meeting with Margaret. The simple girl, returning fro church, is accosted by Faust, and answers him somewh curtly; here commences the love-episode which gives to th poem a magic none can resist. Shakspeare himself has draw no such portrait as that of Margaret: no such peculiar unic of passion, simplicity, homeliness, and witchery. The pover and inferior social position of Margaret are never lost sight o she never becomes an abstraction; it is Love alone whic exalts her above her lowly station, and it is only *in* passion th she is so exalted. Very artful and very amusing is the contra between this simple girl and her friend Martha, who mak love to Mephisto with direct worldly shrewdness. The effe of this contrast in the celebrated garden scene is very fine and what a scene that is! I have no language in which t express its intense and overpowering effect: the picture is or which remains indelible in the memory; certain lines linger i the mind, and stir it like the memory of deep pathetic musi For instance, Margaret's asking him to think of her, even if be for a moment,—she will have time enough to think of *him*

> Denkt ihr an mich ein Augenblickchen nur,
> *Ich werde Zeit genug an euch zu denken haben:*

What a picture of woman's lonely life, in which the thought not called out by the busy needs of the hour, centre in o object! And then that exquisite episode of her plucking th flower, "He loves me—loves me not;" followed by this charm ing reflection when Faust has departed:

> Du lieber Gott! was so ein Mann
> Nicht alles alles denken kann!
> Beschämt nur steh' ich vor ihm da,
> Und sag' zu allen Sachen ja.
> Bin doch ein arm unwissend Kind
> Begreife nicht was er an mir find't.[1]

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[1] The naïveté of expression is not to be translated. Blackie has given t sense:

> Dear God! what such a man as this
> Can think on any thing you may!
> I stand ashamed, and answer yes
> To every word that he may say.
> I wonder what a man so learned as he
> Can find in a poor simple girl like me.

Wood and Cavern. I do not understand the relation of is scene to the whole. Faust is alone among the solitudes Nature, pouring out his rapture and his despair:

Faust. Alas! that man enjoys no perfect bliss,
I feel it now. Thou gavest me with this joy,
Which brings me near and nearer to the gods,
A fellow, whom I cannot do without;
Though, cold and heartless, he debases me
Before myself, and, with a single breath
Blows all the bounties of thy love to nought.
He fans within my breast a raging fire
For that fair image, busy to do ill.
Thus reel I from desire on to enjoyment,
And in enjoyment languish for desire.

Mephisto enters, and the two wrangle. The scene is full of e things, but its position in the work is not clear to me. It followed by that scene in Margaret's room which exhibits her the spinning-wheel, singing *Mein Ruh' ist hin*—"My peace is ne, my heart is sad;" and is succeeded by the second arden scene, in which she questions Faust about his religion. must give the famous confession of Faith, though more erally than Blackie renders it:

Misunderstand me not, thou lovely one.
Who dare name Him?
And who confess:
"I believe in Him"?
Who can feel
And force himself
To say: "I believe not in Him"?
The All-encompasser,
The All-sustainer
Encompasses, sustains he not
Thee, Me, Himself?
Does not the Heaven arch itself above?
Lies not the earth firm here below?
And rise not the eternal stars
Looking downwards friendly?
Gaze not our eyes into each other,
And is not all thronging
To thy head and heart,
Weaving in eternal mystery
Invisibly visibly about thee?
Fill up thy heart therewith, in all its greatness,
And when thou'rt wholly blest in this emotion,
Then call it what thou wilt,
Call it Joy! Heart! Love! God!
I have no name for it,
Feeling is all-in-all.
Name is sound and smoke,
Clouding the glow of Heaven.

Margaret feels this confession to be the same in substance
that the Priest tells her, only in somewhat different language

Nur mit ein bischen andern Worten.

There is something inexpressibly touching in her solicitud
about her lover's faith; it serves to bring out one element
her character; as her instinctive aversion to Mephisto bring
out another element: she sees on his forehead that he feels n
sympathy, that "He never yet hath loved a human soul." I
his presence she almost feels that her own love vanishes
certain it is that in his presence she cannot pray.

The guileless innocence which prattles thus, prepares us fo
the naïve readiness with which she expresses her willingness t
admit her lover to her apartment, and consents to give h
mother the sleeping draught. This scene is, with terrib
significance, followed by that brief scene at the Well, whe
Margaret hears her friend Bessy triumph, feminine-wise, ov
the fall of one of their companions. Women, in all oth
things so compassionate, are merciless to each other precise
in those situations where feminine sympathy would be mo
grateful, where feminine tenderness should be most suggestiv
Bessy says not a word against the seducer; her wrath fal
entirely on the victim, who has been "rightly served
Margaret—taught compassion by experience—cannot *no*
triumph as formerly she would have triumphed. But nc
she too is become what she chid, she too is a sinner, a
cannot chide! The closing words of this soliloquy ha
never been translated; there is a something in the simplici
and intensity of the expression which defies translation.

Doch—alles was dazu mich trieb,
Gott! war so gut! ach war so lieb![1]

The next scene shows her praying to the Virgin, the Moth
of Sorrows; and this is succeeded by the return of her broth
Valentine, suffering greatly from his sister's shame; he int
rupts the serenade of Faust, attacks him, and is stabbed
Mephisto, falls, and expires uttering vehement reproach
against Margaret. From this bloodshed and horror we a
led to the Cathedral. Margaret prays amid the crowd—t
evil spirit at her side. A solemn, almost stifling sense of a

[1] The meaning is, "Yet if I sinned, the sin came to me in shape so good
lovely, that I loved it."

ses through the mind at this picture of the harassed sinner eking refuge, and finding fresh despair. Around her kneel silence those who hear with comfort the words to her so rrible:

Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvet sæclum in favilla!

d when the choir bursts forth—

Judex ergo cum sedebit
Quidquid latet apparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit—

e is overpowered by remorse, for the Evil Spirit interprets ese words in their most appalling sense.

The Walpurgis Nacht. The introduction of this scene in is place would be a great error if *Faust* were simply a drama. ne mind resents being snatched away from the contemplation human passion, and plunged into the vagaries of dreamland. fter shuddering with Margaret, we are in no mood for the ocksberg. But *Faust* is not a drama; its purpose is not ainly that of unfolding before our eyes the various evolutions an episode of life; its object is not to rivet attention rough a story. It is a grand legendary spectacle, in which phases of life are represented. The scene on the Blocksrg is part of the old Legend, and is to be found in many rsions of the puppet-play.[1] Note how Goethe introduces e scene immediately after that in the Cathedral—thus reesenting the wizard-element in contrast with the religious ement; just as previously he contrasted the Witches' itchen and its orgies with the orgies of Auerbach's cellar. We must not linger on the Blocksberg, but return to earth, d the tragic drama there hastening to its dénouement. duction has led to infanticide; infanticide has led to the ndemnation of Margaret. Faust learns it all; learns that a ple murder lies to his account—Valentine, Margaret, and r child. In his despair he reproaches Mephisto for having ncealed this from him, and wasted his time in insipid oleries. Mephisto coldly says that Margaret is not the first o has so died. Upon which Faust breaks forth: "Not the st! Misery! Misery! by no human soul to be conceived! at more than one creature of God should ever have been

[1] In the Strasburg version, Mephisto promises Hanswurst a steed on which nay gallop through the air; but, instead of a winged horse, there comes an goat with a light under his tail.

plunged into the depth of this woe! that the first, in th writhing agony of her death, should not have atoned for th guilt of all the rest before the eyes of the eternally Merciful!

One peculiarity is noticeable in this scene: it is the only b of prose in the whole work;—what could have determined hi to write it in prose? At first I thought it might be the natu of the scene; but the intensity of language seems to deman verse, and surely the scene in Auerbach's cellar is more prosa in its nature than this? The question then remains, and o it the critic may exert his ingenuity.

What painting in the six brief lines which make up the su ceeding scene! Faust and Mephisto are riding over a wil and dreary plain; the sound of carpenters at work on th gibbet informs them of the preparations for the execution Margaret.

And now the final scene opens. Faust enters the dungeo where Margaret lies huddled on a bed of straw, singing wil snatches of ancient ballads, her reason gone, her end approach ing. The terrible pathos of this interview draws tears into ou eyes after twenty readings. As the passion rises to a clima the grim, passionless face of Mephistopheles appears—thus con pleting the circle of irony which runs throughout the poen Every one feels this scene to be untranslatable. The witche of such lines as

Sag' niemand dass du schon bei Gretchen warst,

Mr. Hayward has already pointed out as beyond translatio "indeed it is only by a lucky chance that a succession simple, heartfelt expressions or idiomatic felicities are ev capable of exact representation in another language."[1]

The survey just taken, disclosing a succession of varie scenes representative of Life, will not only help to expla the popularity of Faust, but may help also to explain th secret of its composition. The rapidity and variety of th scenes give the work an air of formlessness, until we ha seized the principle of organic unity binding these scenes in a whole. The reader who first approaches it is generally di appointed: the want of visible connection makes it appe more like a Nightmare than a work of Art. Even acco plished critics have been thus misled. Thus Coleridge, wh battled so ingeniously for Shakspeare's Art, was utterly at

[1] *Translation of Faust:* Preface, p. xxxi, 3rd Edition.

ss to recognise any unity in Faust. "There is no whole the poem," he said, "the scenes are mere magic-lantern ictures, and a large part of the work is to me very flat."[1] oleridge, combating French critics, proclaimed (in language ightly altered from Schlegel) that the unity of a work of Art "organic, not mechanic;" and he was held to have done gnal service by pointing out the unity of Shakspeare's con- eption underlying variety of detail; but when he came to oethe, whom he disliked, and of whom he always spoke un- orthily, he could see nothing but magic-lantern scenes in ariety of detail. If *Hamlet* is not a magic-lantern, *Faust* is ot. The successive scenes of a magic-lantern have no con- ection with a general plan; have no dependence one upon ne other. In the analysis just submitted to the reader, both ne general plan and the interdependence of the scenes have, is hoped, been made manifest. A closer familiarity with ne work removes the first feeling of disappointment. We arn to understand it, and our admiration grows with our nlightenment. The picture is painted with so cunning a nd, and yet with so careless an air, that Strength is veiled y Grace, and nowhere seems straining itself in Effort.

I believe few persons have read *Faust* without disappoint- ent. There are works which, on a first acquaintance, ravish s with delight: the ideas are new; the form is new; the xecution striking. In the glow of enthusiasm we pronounce ne new work a masterpiece. We study it, learn it by heart, nd somewhat weary our acquaintances by the emphasis of nthusiasm. In a few years, or it may be months, the work as become unreadable, and we marvel at our old admiration. he ideas are no longer novel; they appear truisms or perhaps llsisms. The execution is no longer admirable, for we have iscovered its trick. In familiarising our minds with the work, ur admiration has been slowly strangled by the contempt hich familiarity is said to breed, but which familiarity only reeds in contemptible minds, or for things contemptible. he work then was no masterpiece? Not in the least.[2] A asterpiece excites no sudden enthusiasm; it must be studied uch and long, before it is fully comprehended; we must

[1] *Table Talk*, vol. ii. p. 114.

[2] "A deduction must be made from the opinion which even the wise express a new book or occurrence. Their opinion gives me tidings of their mood, d some vague guess at the new fact, but is nowise to be trusted as the sting relation between that intellect and that thing."—*Emerson*.

grow up to it, for it will not descend to us. Its influence less sudden, more lasting. Its emphasis grows with familiari We never become disenchanted; we grow more and mc awestruck at its infinite wealth. We discover no trick, there is none to discover. Homer, Shakspeare, Rapha Beethoven, Mozart, never storm the judgment; but, on fairly in possession, they retain it with increasing influence. remember looking at the Elgin Marbles with an indifferen which I was ashamed to avow; and since then I have sto before them with a rapture almost rising into tears. On t other hand, works which now cannot detain me a minu before them, excited sudden enthusiasm such as in retr spection seems like the boyish taste for unripe apples. Wi *Faust* my first feeling was disappointment. Not understan ing the real nature of the work, I thought Goethe had miss his aim, because he did not fulfil my conceptions. It is t arrogance of criticism to demand that the artist, who nev thought of us, should work in the direction of our though As I grew older, and began to read *Faust* in the origin (helped by the dictionary), its glory gradually dawned up my mind. It is now one of those works which exercise fascination to be compared only to the minute and inexhaustib love we feel for those long dear to us, every expression havi a peculiar and, by association, quite mystic influence.

A masterpiece like *Faust*, because it is a masterpiece, w be almost certain to create disappointment, in proportion the expectations formed of it. Sir Joshua Reynolds, on h first visit to the Vatican, could not conceal his mortificati at not relishing the works of Raphael, and was only relieve from it on discovering that others had experienced the sa feeling. "The truth is," he adds, "that if these works h been really what I expected, they would have contain beauties superficial and alluring, but by no means such would have entitled them to their great reputation." W need not be surprised therefore to hear even distinguished m express unfavourable opinions of *Faust*. Charles Lamb, instance, thought it a vulgar melodrame in comparison wi Marlowe's *Faustus;* an opinion he never could have form had he read *Faust* in the original. He read it in a translati and no work suffers more from translation. However u willing a reader may be that his competence to pronounce judgment should be called in question, it must be said in seriousness and with the most complete absence of exagge

on and prejudice, that in translation he really has not the ork before him.

Several times in these pages I have felt called upon to rotest against the adequacy of all translation of poetry. In happiest efforts, translation is but approximation; and its forts are not often happy. A translation may be good *as* anslation, but it cannot be an adequate reproduction of the iginal. It may be a good poem; it may be a good imitation another poem; it may be better than the original; but it nnot be an adequate reproduction; it cannot be the same ing in another language, producing the same effect on the ind. And the cause lies deep in the nature of poetry. Melody," as Beethoven said to Bettina, "gives a *sensuous istence to poetry;* for does not the meaning of a poem come embodied in melody?" The meanings of a poem d the meanings of the individual words may be produced; t in a poem meaning and form are as indissoluble as soul d body; and the form cannot be reproduced. The effect poetry is a compound of music and suggestion; this music d this suggestion are intermingled in words, to alter which to alter the effect. For words in poetry are not, as in prose, mple representatives of objects and ideas: they are parts of organic whole—they are tones in the harmony; substitute *her* parts, and the result is a monstrosity, as if an arm were bstituted for a wing; substitute *other* tones or semitones, d you produce a discord. Words have their music and eir shades of meaning too delicate for accurate reproduction any other form; the suggestiveness of one word cannot be nveyed by another. Now all translation is of necessity a bstitution of one word for another: the substitute may press the meaning, but it cannot accurately reproduce the usic, nor those precise shades of suggestiveness on which e delicacy and beauty of the original depend. Words are t only symbols of objects, but centres of associations; and eir suggestiveness depends partly on their sound. Thus ere is not the slightest difference in the meaning expressed en I say

The dews of night began to fall,

The nightly dews commenced to fall.

eaning and metre are the same; but one is poetry, the er prose. Wordsworth paints a landscape in this line:

The river wanders at its own sweet will.

Let us translate it into other words:

The river runneth free from all restraint.

We preserve the meaning, but where is the landscape? we may turn it thus:

The river flows, now here, now there, at will,

which is a very close translation, much closer than any usual found in a foreign language, where indeed it would in a probability assume some such form as this:

The river self-impelled pursues its course.

In these examples we have what is seldom found in tran lations, accuracy of meaning expressed in similar metre; y the music and the poetry are gone; because the music and th poetry are organically dependent on certain peculiar arrang ments of sound and suggestion. Walter Scott speaks of th verse of a ballad by Mickle which haunted his boyhood; it this:

The dews of summer night did fall;
The moon, sweet regent of the sky,
Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall,
And many an oak that grew thereby.

This verse we will re-arrange as a translator would arrange it

The nightly dews commenced to fall;
The moon, whose empire is the sky,
Shone on the sides of Cumnor Hall,
And all the oaks that stood thereby.

Here is a verse which certainly would never have haunted a one; and yet upon what apparently slight variations t difference of effect depends! The meaning, metre, rhyme and most of the words, are the same; yet the difference in t result is infinite. Let us translate it a little more freely:

Sweetly did fall the dews of night;
The moon, of heaven the lovely queen,
On Cumnor Hall shone silver bright,
And glanced the oaks' broad boughs between.

I appeal to the reader's experience whether this is not a tra lation which in another language would pass for excellent; a nevertheless it is not more like the original than a wax rose like a garden rose. To conclude these illustrations, I will gi one which may serve to bring into relief the havoc made

anslators who adopt a *different* metre from that of the riginal.[1] Wordsworth begin his famous Ode:

> There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
> The earth, and every common sight,
> To me did seem
> Apparelled in celestial light,
> The glory and the freshness of a dream.
> It is not now as it hath been of yore;
> Turn wheresoe'er I may,
> By night or day,
> The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

he translator, fully possessed with the sense of the passage, akes no mistake, but adopting another metre, we will ppose, paraphrases it thus:

> A time there was when wood, and stream, and field,
> The earth, and every common sight, did yield
> To me a pure and heavenly delight,
> Such as is seen in dream and vision bright.
> That time is past; no longer can I see
> The things which charmed my youthful reverie.

hese are specimens of translating from English into English,[2] nd show what effects are produced by a change of music and change of suggestion. It is clear that in a foreign language e music must incessantly be changed, and as no complex ords are precisely equivalent in two languages, the suggestions ust also be different. Idioms are of course untranslatable. elicities of expression are the idioms of the poet; but as on e one hand these felicities are essential to the poem, and on e other hand untranslatable, the vanity of translation be- omes apparent. I do not say that a translator cannot produce fine poem in imitation of an original poem; but I utterly sbelieve in the possibility of his giving us a work which can e to us what the original is to those who read it. If, therefore, e reflect what a poem *Faust* is, and that it contains almost very variety of style and metre, it will be tolerably evident that o one unacquainted with the original can form an *adequate* ea of it from translation; and if this is true, it will explain hy Charles Lamb should prefer Marlowe's *Faustus*, and why any other readers should speak slightingly of the *Faust*.

[1] "Goethe's poems," said Beethoven, "exercise a great sway over me, not ly by their meaning, but by their rhythm also. It is a language which ges me on to composition."

[2] Aristotle has a very similar argument and mode of illustration in the *De etica*.

As useful memoranda for comparison, I will here analy
Marlowe's *Faustus* and Calderon's *El Magico Prodigioso*.

Doctor Faustus has many magnificent passages, such
Marlowe of the "mighty line" could not fail to write; but
the whole it is wearisome, vulgar, and ill-conceived. T
lowest buffoonery, destitute of wit, fills a large portion of t
scenes; and the serious parts want dramatic evolution. The
is no character well drawn. The melancholy figure of Meph
topholis has a certain grandeur, but he is not the Tempt
according to the common conception, creeping to his purp
with the cunning of the serpent; nor is he the cold, ironic
"spirit that denies;" he is more like the Satan of Byron, wi
a touch of piety and much repentance. The language
addresses to Faustus is such as would rather frighten th
seduce him.

The reader who opens *Faustus* under the impression that
is about to see a philosophical subject treated philosophical
will have mistaken both the character of Marlowe's genius a
of Marlowe's epoch. *Faustus* is no more philosophical
intention than the *Jew of Malta*, or *Tamburlaine the Gre*
It is simply the theatrical treatment of a popular legend,—
legend admirably characteristic of the spirit of those ages
which men, believing in the agency of the devil, would willing
have bartered their future existence for the satisfaction of p
sent desires. Here undoubtedly is a philosophical proble
which even in the present day is constantly presenting its
to the speculative mind. Yes, even in the present day, sin
human nature does not change: forms only change, the spi
remains; nothing perishes,—it only manifests itself different
Men, it is true, no longer believe in the devil's agency; at lea
they no longer believe in the power of calling up the de
and transacting business with him; otherwise there would
hundreds of such stories as that of Faust. But the spirit whi
created that story and rendered it credible to all Europe
mains unchanged. The sacrifice of the future to the prese
is the spirit of that legend. The blindness to consequenc
caused by the imperiousness of desire; the recklessness w
which inevitable and terrible results are braved in perfect co
sciousness of their being inevitable, provided that a tempora
pleasure can be obtained, is the spirit which dictated Faus
barter of his soul, which daily dictates the barter of me
souls. We do not make compacts, but we throw away
lives; we have no Tempter face to face with us, offeri

imitable power in exchange for our futurity: but we have ır own Desires, imperious, insidious, and for them we barter ır existence,—for one moment's pleasure risking years of ıguish.

The story of Faustus suggests many modes of philosophical eatment, but Marlowe has not availed himself of any: he as taken the popular view of the legend, and given his hero e vulgarest motives. This is not meant as a criticism, but a statement. I am not sure that Marlowe was wrong in so eating his subject; I am only sure that he treated it so. austus is disappointed with logic, because it teaches him othing but debate,—with physic, because he cannot with it ing dead men back to life,—with law, because it concerns ly the "external trash,"—and with divinity, because it aches that the reward of sin is death, and that we are all nners. Seeing advantage in none of these studies he takes necromancy, and there finds content; and how?

> *Faust.* How am I glutted with conceit of this!
> Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please?
> Resolve me of all ambiguities?
> Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
> I'll have them fly to India for gold,
> Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
> And search all corners of the new-found world
> For pleasant fruits and princely delicates.
> I'll have them read me strange philosophy;
> And tell the secrets of all foreign kings:
> I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
> And make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenburg:
> I'll have them fill the public schools with skill,
> Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad:
> I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
> And chase the prince of Parma from our land,
> And reign sole king of all the provinces:
> Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
> Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp bridge,
> I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

There may in this seem something trivial to modern appre-nsions, yet Marlowe's audience sympathised with it, having e feelings of an age when witches were burned, when men ere commonly supposed to hold communication with infernal irits, when the price of damnation was present enjoyment.

The compact signed, Faustus makes use of his power by ampering over the world, performing practical jokes and lgar incantations,—knocking down the Pope, making horns rout on the heads of noblemen, cheating a jockey by selling n a horse of straw, and other equally vulgar tricks, which

were just the things the audience would have done had the possessed the power. Tired of his buffooneries he calls up th vision of Helen; his rapture at the sight is a fine specimen how Marlowe can write on a fitting occasion.

His last hour now arrives: he is smitten with remorse, lik many of his modern imitators, when it is too late; sated wit his power, he now shudders at the price. After some tragic raving, and powerfully depicted despair, he is carried off b devils. The close is in keeping with the commencemen Faustus is damned because he made the compact. Each pa of the bargain is fulfilled; it is a tale of sorcery, and Faustu meets the fate of a sorcerer.

The vulgar conception of this play is partly the fault Marlowe, and partly of his age. It might have been treate quite in conformity with the general belief; it might have bee a tale of sorcery, and yet magnificently impressive. Wha would not Shakspeare have made of it? Nevertheless, w must in justice to Marlowe look also to the state of opinio in his time; and we shall then admit that another and highe mode of treatment would perhaps have been less acceptabl to the audience. Had it been metaphysical, they would no have understood it; had the motives of Faustus been mo elevated, the audience would not have believed in them To have saved him at last, would have been to violate th legend, and to outrage their moral sense. For, why shoul the black arts be unpunished? why should not the sorcer be damned? The legend was understood in its literal sens in perfect accordance with the credulity of the audience. Th symbolical significance of the legend is entirely a moder creation.

Let us now turn to Calderon's *El Magico Prodigioso*, ofte said to have furnished Goethe with the leading idea of h *Faust*, which, however, does *not* resemble *El Magico* in plo incidents, situations, characters, or ideas. The *Faustus* Marlowe has a certain superficial resemblance to the *Faus* because the same legend is adopted in both; but in *El Magi* the legend is altogether different; the treatment differen Calderon's latest editor, Don Eugenio de Ochoa, is qui puzzled to conceive how the notion of resemblance got in circulation, and gravely declares that it is *enteramente infundad*

The scene lies in the neighbourhood of Antioch, wher with "glorious festival and song," a temple is being cons crated to Jupiter. Cyprian, a young student, perplexing hi

elf with the dogmas of his religion (polytheism), has retired om the turmoil of the town to enjoy himself in quiet study. liny's definition of God is unsatisfactory, and Cyprian is deter- ined on finding a better. A rustling among the leaves dis- rbs him, caused by the demon, who appears in the dress of cavalier. They commence an argument, Cyprian pointing ut the error of polytheism, the demon maintaining its truth. Ve see that Cyprian has been converted to monotheism—a ep towards his conversion to Christianity; and this conver- on operated by the mere force of truth, this change of opinion esulting from an examination of polytheism, was doubtless attering to Calderon's audience,—a flattery carried to its acme the feeble defence of the demon, who on his entrance de- ares, aside, that Cyprian shall never find the truth. Calderon ould not let the devil have the best of the argument even for moment. Instead of the "spirit that denies," he presents s with a malignant fiend, as impotent as he is malignant,—a end who acknowledges himself worsted in the argument, and ho resolves to conquer by lust the student whom he cannot elude by sophisms. He has power given him to wage enmity gainst Justina's soul; he will make Justina captivate Cyprian, nd with one blow effect two vengeances. We need not point ut the dissimilarity between such a fiend and the fiend Mephis- opheles.

Cyprian is left alone to study, but is again interrupted by he quarrel of Lelio and Floro, two of his friends, who, both namoured of Justina, have resolved to decide their rivalry by he sword. Cyprian parts them, and consents to become rbiter. He then undertakes to visit Justina, in order to scertain to whom she gives the preference. In this visit he lls in love with her himself. There is an under-plot, in which loscon, Clarin, and Libia, according to the usual style of panish comedies, parody the actions and sentiments of their asters; I omit it, as well as the other scenes which do not ear on the subject matter of the drama.

Justina, a recent convert to Christianity, is the type of hristian innocence. She rejects Cyprian's love, as she had jected that of her former admirers. The coldness exas- erates him:

> So beautiful she was—and I,
> Between my love and jealousy,
> And so convulsed with hope and fear,
> Unworthy as it may appear,—

So bitter is the life I live
That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
To thy most detested spirit
My soul, for ever, to inherit,
To suffer punishment and pine,
So this woman may be mine.
Hear'st thou, Hell? Dost thou reject it?
My soul is offered.
Demon (*unseen*). I accept it.
(*Tempest, with thunder and lightning.*)

In another writer we might pause to remark on the "wan of keeping" in making a polytheist address such a prayer t hell; but Calderon is too full of such things to cause surpris at any individual instance. The storm rages,—a ship goe down at sea; the demon enters as a shipwrecked passenge and says aside:

It was essential to my purposes
To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,
That in this unknown form I might at length
Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture
Sustained upon the mountain, and assail
With a new war the soul of Cyprian,
Forging the instruments of his destruction
Even from his love and from his wisdom.

Cyprian addresses words of comfort to him on his mi fortune; the demon says it is in vain to hope for comfor since all is lost that gave life value. He then tells his story describing, by means of a very transparent equivocation, th history of his rebellion in heaven and his chastisement. I the course of his narrative he insinuates his power of magi hoping to awaken in Cyprian's breast a love of the ar Cyprian offers him the hospitality due to a stranger, and the quit the scene.

In their next scene the demon asks Cyprian the reason his constant melancholy. This is an opportunity for the di play of fustian, never let slip by a Spanish dramatist. Cypria describes his mistress and his passion for her with the vol bility of a lover, and the taste of an Ossian. He very circun stantially informs the demon that the "partes que compone a esta divina muger"—the charms which adorn this paragon- are the charms of Aurora, of fleecy clouds and pearly dews, balmy gales and early roses, of meandering rivulets and glitte ing stars, of warbling birds and crystal rocks, of laurels and sunbeams; and so forth through the space of more than fif lines, in a style to captivate magazine poets, and to make oth

aders yawn. Having described her, he declares that he is so ıtranced with this creature as to have entirely forsaken philo- phy; he is willing to give away his soul for her. The demon ccepts the offer, splits open a rock and shows Justina reclining leep. Cyprian rushes towards her, but the rock closes again, ıd the demon demands that the compact shall be signed efore the maiden is delivered. Cyprian draws blood from s arm, and with his dagger writes the agreement on some nen. The demon then consents to instruct him in magic, which, at the expiration of one year, he will be able to ossess Justina.

This temptation-scene is very trivial,—feeble in conception ıd bungling in execution. Remark the gross want of artistic eeping in it: Cyprian had before addressed a vow to hell that e would give his soul for Justina; the demon answered, "I ccept it!" Thunder and lightning followed,—effective enough a melo-dramatic *coup de théâtre*, utterly useless to the play; r although the demon appears, it is not to make a compact ith Cyprian, it is not even to tempt him; it is simply to ecome acquainted with him, gain his confidence, and *after- ards* tempt him. The time elapses, and the demon then mpts Cyprian as we have seen. How poor, feeble, and aggering these outlines! What makes the feebleness of this ene stand out still more clearly, is the gross and senseless ırody of Clarin, the *gracioso*. Like his master, he too is in ve; like his master he offers to sell his soul to the demon, ıd strikes his nose, that with the blood he may write the mpact on his handkerchief.

It is in this temptation-scene, however, that the single point resemblance occurs between the plays of Calderon and oethe. It is extremely slight, as every one will observe; but ght as it is, some critics have made it the basis of their ption of plagiarism. The compact is the point which the gend of St. Cyprian and the legend of Faust have in common. all other respects the legends differ and the poems differ. is curious however to compare the motives of the three roes, Faustus, Cyprian, and Faust; to compare what each mands in return for his soul; and in this comparison alderon "shows least bravely;" his hero is the most pitiful the three.

To return to our analysis: The year's probation has expired, d Cyprian is impatient for his reward. He has learned the ts of necromancy, in which he is almost as proficient as his

master; boasts of being able to call the dead from out the graves, and of possessing many other equally wonderf powers. Yet with this science he does nothing, attemp nothing. Of what use then was the year's probation? of wh use this necromantic proficiency? Had the question been p to Calderon he would probably have smiled, and answere "to prolong the play and give it variety,"—a sensible answ from a rapid playwright, but one which ill accords with th modern notion of his being a profound artist. Perhaps it too much to expect that a man who wrote between one an two hundred plays should have produced one that could b regarded as a work of art; nor should we have judged him b any higher standard than that of a rapid and effective pla wright, had not the Germans been so hyperbolical in criticisn which the English, who seldom read the poet, take for grante must be just.

The demon calls upon the spirits of hell to instil int Justina's mind impure thoughts, so that she may incline t Cyprian. But this could have been done at first, and so hav spared Cyprian his year's probation and his necromant studies, — studies which are never brought to bear upo Justina herself, though undertaken expressly for her conques Justina enters in a state of violent agitation: a portion the scene will serve as a specimen. I borrow from the tran lation of this scene which appeared in the *Monthly Chronic* vi. p. 346.

The demon enters and Justina asks him:

Say if thou a phantom art,
Formed by terror and dismay?
Dæm. No; but one call'd by the thought
That now rules, with tyrant sway,
O'er thy faltering heart,—a man
Whom compassion hither brought,
That he might point out the way
Whither fled thy Cyprian.
Just. And so shalt thou fail. This storm
Which afflicts my frenzied soul
May imagination form
To its wish, but ne'er shall warm
Reason to its mad control.
Dæm. If thou hast the thought permitted,
Half the sin is almost done!
Wilt thou, since 't is all committed,
Linger ere the joy be won?
Just. In our power abides not thought,
(Thought, alas! how vain to fly);
But the deed is, and 't is one
That we sin in mind have sought

And another to have done:
I'll not move my foot to try.
Dæm. If a mortal power assail
Justina with all its might,
Say will not the victory fail
When thy wish will not avail,
But inclines thee in despite?
Just. By opposing to thee now
My free will and liberty.
Dæm. To my power they soon shall bow.
Just. If it could such power avow,
Would our free will then be free?
Dæm. Come, 'tis bliss that thou wilt prove.
Just. Dearly would I gain it so.
Dæm. It is peace, and calm, and love. (*Draws, but cannot move her.*)
Just. It is misery, death, despair!
Dæm. Heavenly joy!
Just. 'Tis bitter woe!
Dæm. Lost and shamed, forsaken one!
Who in thy defence shall dare?
Just. My defence is God alone.
Dæm. Virgin, virgin, thou hast won! (*Loosens his hold.*)

How delighted must the audience have been at this victory ver the demon, by the mere announcement of a faith in God! nable to give Cyprian the real Justina, the demon determines n deceiving him with a phantom. A figure enveloped in a oak appears, and bids Cyprian follow. In the next scene yprian enters with the fancied Justina in his arms. In his ansport he takes off the cloak, and instead of Justina dis-overs a Skeleton, who replies to his exclamation of horror:

Así, Cipriano, son
Todas las glorias del mundo!

Such are the glories of this world." In this terrific situation e recognise the inquisitor and the playwright, but the artist e do not recognise. As a piece of stage effect this skeleton powerfully conceived; as a religious warning it is equally owerful; as art it is detestable. It is a fine situation, though e has used it twice elsewhere; but the consistency of the play violated by it. If the demon wished to seduce Cyprian, ould he have attempted to do so by *such* means? No. But alderon here, as elsewhere, sacrifices everything to a *coup de héâtre.*

Cyprian, exasperated at the deception, demands an ex-lanation. The demon confesses that he is unable to force ıstina, as she is under the protection of a superior power yprian asks who that power is. The demon hesitates, but is length obliged to own that it is the God of the Christians.

Cyprian seeing that God protects those who believe in him refuses to own allegiance to any other. The demon is furious and demands Cyprian's soul, who contends that the demon has not fulfilled his share of the compact. Words run high Cyprian draws his sword and stabs the demon, of course without avail,—another stage effect. The demon drags him away, but, like Justina, he calls God to his aid, and the demon rushes off discomfited.

Cyprian becomes a Christian, and Justina assures him of his salvation in spite of his sins, for—

> . . . . no tiene
> Tantas estrellas el cielo,
> Tantas arenes el mar,
> Tantas centelles el fuego,
> Tantos átomes el dia,
> Como él perdona pecados.

Justina and Cyprian are condemned as heretics, and burned at Antioch, martyrs of the Christian faith. The demon appears riding on a serpent in the air, and addresses the audience, telling them that God has forced him to declare the innocence of Justina, and the freedom of Cyprian from his rash engagement. Both now repose in the realms of the blessed.

These analyses will enable the reader to perceive how Marlowe and Calderon have treated the old story, each in a spirit conformable with his genius and his age; the one presenting a legend in its naïveté, the other a legend as the vehicle for religious instruction. Goethe taking up the legend in an age when the naïve belief could no longer be accepted, treated it likewise in a way conformable with his genius and his age. The age demanded that it should be no simple legend, but a symbolical legend; not a story to be credited as *fact*, but a story to be credited as *representative* of fact; for although the rudest intellect would reject the notion of any such actual compact with Satan, the rudest and the loftiest would see in that compact a symbol of their own desires and struggles.

To adapt the legend to his age, Goethe was forced to treat it symbolically, and his own genius gave the peculiar direction to that treatment. We shall see in the Second Part, how his waning vigour sought inspiration more in symbolism than in poetry, more in reflection than in emotion; but for the present confining ourselves to the First Part, we note in his treatment a marvellous mingling of the legendary and the symbolical, of

ne mediæval and the modern. The depth of wisdom, the xquisite poetry, the clear bright painting, the wit, humour, nd pathos, every reader will distinguish; and if this chapter ere not already too long, I should be glad to linger over any details, but must now content myself with the briefest ndication of the general aspects of the poem.

And first of the main theme: "The intended theme of Faust," says Coleridge, "is the consequences of a misology or atred and depreciation of knowledge caused by an originally atense thirst for knowledge baffled. But a love of knowedge for itself and for pure ends would never produce such a aisology, but only a love of it for base and unworthy purposes." Having stated this to be the theme, Coleridge thus riticises the execution: "There is neither causation nor roportion in Faust; he is a ready-made conjuror from the eginning; the *incredulus odi* is felt from the first line. The ensuality and thirst after knowledge are unconnected with ach other."[1] Here we have an example of that criticism efore alluded to, which imposes the conceptions of the critic s the true end and aim of the artist. Coleridge had formed he plan of a Faust of his own, and blames Goethe for not eating the topic in the way Coleridge conceived it should be eated. A closer scrutiny would have convinced him that aisology is not the intended theme. After the first two cenes knowledge is never mentioned; misology is exhausted s a topic in the initial stages of the work. And what says oethe himself? "The marionnette fable of Faust murmured ith *many voices* in my soul. I too had wandered into every epartment of knowledge, and had returned early enough atisfied with the vanity of science. And life, too, I had tried nder various aspects, and always came back sorrowing and nsatisfied." Here, if anywhere, we have the key to *Faust*. It a reflex of the struggles of his soul. Experience had taught m the vanity of philosophy; experience had early taught m to detect the corruption underlying civilisation, the dark nder-currents of crime concealed beneath smooth outward nformity. If then we distinguish for a moment one of e two aspects of the poem—if we set aside the picture, consider only the problem—we come to the conclusion at the theme of *Faust* is the cry of despair over the othingness of life. Misology forms a portion, but only a

[1] *Table Talk*, vol. ii. p. 111.

portion of the theme. Baffled in his attempts to penetrate th *mystery* of Life, Faust yields himself to the Tempter, who pr mises that he shall penetrate the *enjoyment* of Life. He run the round of pleasure, as he had run the round of science, an fails. The orgies of Auerbach's cellar, the fancies of th Blocksberg, are unable to satisfy his cravings. The passio he feels for Gretchen is vehement, but feverish, transitory she has no power to make him say to the passing momen "Stay, thou art fair." He is restless because he seeks,—seek the Absolute, which can never be found. This is the doo of humanity:

Es irrt der Mensch so lang' er strebt.

It has been said reproachfully that in *Faust* the problem i stated but not solved. I do not think this reproach valid because I do not think a poem was the fit vehicle for a solu tion. When the Singer becomes a Demonstrator, he abdicate his proper office, to bungle in the performance of anothe But very noticeable it is that Goethe, who has so clearl stated the problem, has also, both practically, in his life, an theoretically, in his writings, given us the nearest approach t a solution by showing how the "heavy and the weary weight of this great burden may be wisely borne. His doctrine o Renunciation—*das wir entsagen müssen*—applied by him wit fertile results in so many directions, both in life and theory will be found to approach a solution, or at any rate to leav the insoluble mystery without its perplexing and tormentin influence. Activity and sincerity carry us far, if we begin b Renunciation, if we at the outset content ourselves with th Knowable and Attainable, and give up the wild impatience o desire for the Unknowable and Unattainable. The mystery o existence is an awful problem, but it *is* a mystery and place beyond the boundaries of human faculty. Recognise it as such and renounce! Knowledge can only be relative, never absolut But this relative knowledge is infinite, and to us infinitel important: in that wide sphere let each work according t ability. Happiness, ideal and absolute, is equally unattain able: renounce it! The sphere of active Duty is wid sufficing, ennobling to all who strenuously work in it. I the very sweat of labour there is stimulus which gives energ to life; and a consciousness that our labour tends in som way to the lasting benefit of others, makes the rolling yea endurable.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LYRICAL POEMS

'HE *Faust* and the Lyrics suffice to give Goethe pre-eminence mong the poets of modern times, Shakspeare excepted; and ad they stood alone as representatives of his genius, no one ould ever have disputed his rank. But he has given the orld many other works: in other words, he has thrown open any avenues through which the citadel of his fame may be ttacked. His fame is lessened by his wealth; the fact of his oing so much, has lessened the belief in his power; for as the trength of a beam is measured by its weakest part, so, but njustly, are poets tested by their weakest works, whenever nthusiasm does not drown criticism. Thus does mere wealth ndanger reputation; for when many targets are ranged side y side, the clumsiest archer will succeed in striking one; and hat writer has the best chance with the critics who presents he smallest surface. Greek Literature is so grand to us ainly because it is the fragment of fragments; the master- ieces have survived, and no failures are left to bear counter- vitness. Our own contemporary Literature seems so poor to s, not because there are no good books, but because there re so many bad, that even the good are hidden behind the nass of mediocrity which obtrudes itself upon the eye. Goethe has written forty volumes on widely different subjects. He has written with a perfection no German ever achieved efore, and he has also written with a feebleness which it ould be gratifying to think no German would ever emulate gain. But the weak pages are prose. In verse he is always *singer;* even the poorest poems have something of that grace hich captivates us in his finest. The gift of Song, which is he especial gift of the poet, and which no other talents an replace, makes his trifles pleasant, and his best lyrics natchless.

The lyrics are the best known of his works, and have by heir witchery gained the admiration even of antagonists. One ears very strange opinions about him and his works; but one ever hears anything except praise of the minor poems. They re instinct with life and beauty, against which no prejudice an stand. They give musical form to feelings the most

various, and to feelings that are *true*. They are gay, coque tish, playful, tender, passionate, mournful, reflective, ar picturesque; now simple as the tune which beats time nothing in your head, now laden with weighty thought; one moment reflecting with ethereal grace the whim an fancy of caprice, at another sobbing forth the sorrows whic press a cry from the heart. "These songs," says Hein himself a master of song, "have a playful witchery which inexpressible. The harmonious verses wind round your hea like a tender mistress. The Word embraces you while th Thought imprints a kiss."[1]

Part of this witchery is the sincerity of the style. It doe not seek surprises in diction, nor play amid metaphors, which in most poets, are imperfect expressions of the meaning the are thought to adorn. It opens itself like a flower with ur pretending grace, and with such variety as lies in the natur of the subject: There is no ornament in it. The beautie which it reveals are organic, they form part and parcel o the very tissue of the poem, and are not added as ornament Read, for example, the ballad of the *Fisherman* (translate p. 236). How simple and direct the images; and yet ho marvellously pictorial. Turning to a totally different poem the *Bride of Corinth*,—what can surpass the directness wit which every word indicates the mysterious and terrible situa tion? every line is as a fresh page in the narrative, rapidl and yet gradually unfolded. A young man arrives at Corint from Athens, to seek the bride whom his and her paren have destined for him. Since that agreement of the paren her family has turned Christian; and "when a new faith adopted, love and truth are often uprooted like weeds Ignorant of the change, he arrives. It is late in the nigh The household are asleep; but a supper is brought to hi in his chamber, and he is left alone. The weary youth ha no appetite; he throws himself on his bed without undressin As he falls into a doze the door opens, and by the light of h lamp he sees a strange guest enter—a maiden veiled, clothe in white, about her brow a black and gold band. On seein him, she raises a white hand in terror. She is about to fl but he entreats her to stay—points to the banquet, and bi her sit beside him and taste the joys of the gods, Bacchu Ceres, and Amor. But she tells him she belongs no more

[1] "Die harmonischen Verse umschlingen dein Herz wie eine zärtlic Geliebte; das Wort umarmt dich, während der Gedanke dich küsst."

y; the gods have departed from that silent house where ne alone in Heaven, and One upon the Cross, are adored; o sacrifices of Lamb or Ox are made, the sacrifice is that of a uman life. This is a language the young pagan understands ot. He claims her as his bride. She tells him she has been nt into a cloister. He will hear nothing. Midnight—the ectral hour—sounds; and she seems at her ease. She rinks the purple wine with her white lips, but refuses the read he offers. She gives him a golden chain, and takes in turn a lock of his hair. She tells him she is cold as ice, ut he believes that Love will warm her, even if she be sent om the grave:

> Wechselhauch und Kuss!
> Liebesüberfluss!
> Brennst du nicht und fühlest mich entbrannt?

ove draws them together; eagerly she catches the fire from is lips, and each is conscious of existence only in the other; ut although the vampire bride is warmed by his love, no eart beats in her breast. It is impossible to describe the eird voluptuousness of this strange scene; this union of Life nd Death; this altar of Hymen erected on the tomb. It interrupted by the presence of the mother, who, hearing oices in the bridegroom's room, and the kiss of the lovers ingling with the cockcrow, angrily enters to upbraid her ave, whom she supposes to be with the bridegroom. She nters angry "and sees—God! she sees her own child!" The ampire rises like a Shadow, and reproaches her mother for aving disturbed her. "Was it not enough that you sent e to an early grave?" she asks. But the grave could not ontain her: the psalms of priests—the blessings of priests ad no power over her; earth itself is unable to stifle Love. he has come; she has sucked the blood from her bride-room's heart; she has given him her chain and received the ck of his hair. To-morrow he will be grey; his youth he ust seek once more in the tomb. She bids her mother epare the funeral pyre, open her coffin, and burn the bodies her bridegroom and herself, that they together may hasten the gods.

In the whole of this wondrous ballad there is not a single nage. Everything is told in the most direct and simple style. verything stands before the eye like reality. The same may e said of the well-known *Gott und die Bajadere*, which is,

as it were, the inverse of the *Bride of Corinth*. The India god passing along the banks of the Ganges is invited by th Bajadere to enter her hut, and repose himself. She coquette with him, and lures him with the wiles of her caste. The go smiles and sees with joy, in the depths of her degradation, pure human heart. He gains her love; but, to put her to th severest proof, he makes her pass through

Lust und Entsetzen und grimmige Pein.

She awakes in the morning to find him dead by her side. I an agony of tears she tries in vain to awaken him. The solem awful sounds of the priests chanting the requiem break on he ear. She follows his corpse to the pyre, but the priests driv her away; she was not his wife; she has no claim to die wit him. But Passion is triumphant; she springs into the flames and the god rises from them with the rescued one in his arms

The effect of the changing rhythm of the poem, changin from tender lightness to solemn seriousness, and the art wit which the whole series of events is unfolded in successiv pictures, are what no other German poet has ever attained The same art is noticeable in the *Erl King*, known to ever reader through Schubert's music, if through no other source The father riding through the night, holding his son warm t his breast; the child's terror at the Erl King, whom the fathe does not see; and the bits of landscape which are introduce in so masterly a way, as explanations on the father's part o the appearances which frighten the child; thus mingling th natural and supernatural, as well as imagery with narrative all these are cut with the distinctness of plastic art. Th *Erl King* is usually supposed to have been original; bu Viehoff, in his *Commentary on Goethe's Poems*, thinks that th poem Herder translated from the Danish, *Erlkönigs Tochte* suggested the idea. The verse is the same. The opening lin and the concluding line are nearly the same; but the stor is different, and none of Goethe's art is to be found in th Danish ballad, which tells simply how Herr Oluf rides to hi marriage, and is met on the way by the Erl King's daughte who invites him to dance with her; he replies that he is unabl to stop and dance, for to-morrow is his wedding-day. Sh offers him golden spurs and a silk shirt, but he still replies "To-morrow is my wedding-day." She then offers him heap of gold. "Heaps of gold will I gladly take; but dance I dar not—will not." In anger she strikes him on the heart, an

ids him ride to his bride. On reaching home, his mother aghast at seeing him so pallid. He tells her he has een in the Erl King's country. "And what shall I say to our bride?" "Tell her I am in the wood with my horse nd hound." The morning brings the guests, who ask after Herr Oluf. The bride lifts up the scarlet cloak; "there y Herr Oluf, and he was dead." I have given this outline f the Danish ballad for the reader to compare with the *Erlkönig:* a comparison which will well illustrate the differnce between a legend and a perfect poem.

It is not in the ballads alone, of which three have just been nentioned, that Goethe's superiority is seen. I might go nrough the two volumes of Lyrics, and write a commentary s long as this Biography, without exhausting so fertile a opic. Indeed his Biography is itself but a commentary on nese poems, which are real expressions of what he has nought and felt:

Spät erklingt was früh erklang,
Glück und Unglück wird Gesang.

ven when, as in the ballads, or in poems such as the xquisite Idyl of *Alexis and Dora*, he is not giving utterance o any personal episode, he is scarcely ever *feigning*. Many f the smaller poems are treasures of wisdom; many are little se than the carollings of a bird "singing of summer in full-roated ease." But one and all are inaccessible through anslation; therefore I cannot attempt to give the English ader an idea of them; the German reader has already nticipated me, by studying them in the original.

BOOK THE SEVENTH

1805 TO 1832

Ὡς εὐ ἰσθι ὁτι εμοιγε ὁσον αἱ ἀλλαι αἱ κατα το σωμα ἡδοναι ἀπομαραινονται τοσουτον ἀυξονται αἱ περι τους λογους ἐπιθυμιαι τε και ἡδοναι.—PLATO, *Rep.* i. 6.

"Le Temps l'a rendu spectateur."
MADAME DE STAEL.

CHAPTER I

THE BATTLE OF JENA

THE death of Schiller left Goethe very lonely. It was more than the loss of a friend; it was the loss also of an energetic stimulus which had urged him to production; and in the activity of production he lived an intenser life. During the long laborious years which followed—years of accumulation of study, of fresh experience, and of varied plans—we shall see him produce works of which many might be proud; but the noonday splendour of his life has passed, and the light which we admire is the calm effulgence of the setting sun.

As if to make him fully aware of his loss, Jacobi came to Weimar; and although the first meeting of the old friends was very pleasant, they soon found the chasm which separated them intellectually had become wider and wider, as each developed in his own direction. Goethe found that he understood neither Jacobi's ideas nor his language. Jacobi found himself a stranger in the world of his old friend. This is one of the penalties we pay for progress; we find ourselves severed from the ancient moorings; we find our language is like that of foreigners to those who once were dear to us, and understood us.

Jacobi departed, leaving him more painfully conscious of the loss he had sustained in losing Schiller's ardent sympathy. During the following month, Gall visited Jena, in the first successful eagerness of propagating his system of Phrenology which was then a startling novelty. All who acknowledge the very large debt which Physiology and Psychology owe to Gall's labours (which acknowledgment by no means implies a

cceptance of the premature, and, in many respects, imper-ect, system founded on those labours) will be glad to observe hat Goethe not only attended Gall's lectures, but in private onversations showed so much sympathy, and such ready ppreciation, that Gall visited him in his sick-room, and issected the brain in his presence, communicating all the ew views to which he had been led. Instead of meeting this heory with ridicule, contempt, and the opposition of ancient rejudices—as men of science, no less than men of the vorld, were and are still wont to meet it—Goethe saw at once he importance of Gall's mode of dissection (since universally dopted), and of his leading views;[1] although he also saw hat science was not sufficiently advanced for a correct verdict o be delivered. Gall's doctrine pleased him because it letermined the true position of Psychology in the study of man. t pleased him because it connected man with Nature more ntimately than was done in the old schools, showing the dentity of all mental manifestation of the animal kingdom.[2]

But these profound and delicate investigations were in the ollowing year interrupted by the roar of cannon. On the 4th of October, at seven o'clock in the morning, the thunder f distant artillery alarmed the inhabitants of Weimar. The attle of Jena had begun. Goethe heard the cannon with errible distinctness; but as it slackened towards noon, he at down to dinner as usual. Scarcely had he sat down, when he cannon burst over their heads. Immediately the table as cleared. Riemer found him walking up and down the arden. The balls whirled over the house; the bayonets of he Prussians in flight gleamed over the garden wall. The rench had planted a few guns on the heights above Weimar, rom which they could fire on the town. It was a calm bright ay. In the streets everything appeared dead. Every one ad retreated under cover. Now and then the boom of a annon broke silence; the balls, hissing through the air, ccasionally struck a house. The birds were singing sweetly n the esplanade; and the deep repose of nature formed an wful contrast to the violence of war.

In the midst of this awful stillness a few French hussars

[1] Compare *Freundschaftliebe Briefe von Goethe und seine Frau, an N. eyer*, p. 19.

[2] Gall's assertion that Goethe was born for political oratory more than for oetry, has much amused those who knew Goethe's dislike of politics; and oes not, indeed, seem a very happy hit.

rode into the city, to ascertain if the enemy were there. Presently a whole troop galloped in. A young officer came to Goethe to assure him that his house would be secure from pillage; it had been selected as the quarters of Marshal Augereau. The young hussar who brought this message was Lili's son! He accompanied Goethe to the palace. Meanwhile several of the troopers had made themselves at home in Goethe's house. Many houses were in flames. Cellars were broken open. The pillage began.

Goethe returned from the palace, but without the Marshal who had not yet arrived. They waited for him till deep in the night. The doors were bolted, and the family retired to rest. About midnight two tirailleurs knocked at the door, and insisted on admittance. In vain they were told the house was full, and the Marshal expected. They threatened to break in the windows, if the door were not opened. They were admitted. Wine was set before them, which they drank like troopers, and then they insisted on seeing their host. They were told he was in bed. No matter; he must get up; they had a fancy to see him. In such cases, resistance is futile. Riemer went up and told Goethe, who, putting on his dressing gown, came majestically down stairs, and by his presence considerably awed his drunken guests, who were as polite as French soldiers can be when they please. They talked to him; made him drink with them, with friendly clink of glasses; and suffered him to retire once more to his room. In a little while, however, heated with wine, they insisted on a bed. The other troopers were glad of the floor; but these two would have nothing less than a bed. They stumbled up stairs; broke into Goethe's room, and there a struggle ensued which had a very serious aspect. Christiane, who throughout displayed great courage and presence of mind, procured a rescue, and the intruders were finally dragged from the room. They then threw themselves on the bed kept for the Marshal and no threats would move them. In the morning the Marshal arrived, and sentinels protected the house. But even under this protection, the disquiet may be imagined when we read that twelve casks of wine were drunk in three days; that eight-and-twenty beds were made up for officers and soldiers; and that the other costs of this billeting amounted to more than 2000 dollars.

The sun shining with continuous autumnal splendour in these days looked down on terrible scenes in Weimar. The

illage was prolonged, so that even the palace was almost ripped of the necessaries of life. In this extremity, while ouses were in flames close to the palace, the Duchess Luise anifested that dauntless courage which produced a profound npression on Napoleon, as he entered Weimar, surrounded by ll the terrors of conquest, and was received at the top of the alace stairs by her,—calm, dignified, unmoved. *Voilà une mme à laquelle même nos deux cent canons n'ont pu faire peur!* e said to Rapp. She pleaded for her people; vindicated her usband; and by her constancy and courage prevailed over ie conqueror, who was deeply incensed with the duke, and epeatedly taunted him with the fact that he spared him solely ut of respect for the duchess.

The rage of Napoleon against the duke was as unwise as was intemperate; but I do not allude to it for the purpose f showing how petty the great conqueror could be; I allude o it for the purpose of quoting the characteristic outburst hich it drew from Goethe. "Formed by nature to be a alm and impartial spectator of events, even I am exasperated," aid Goethe to Falk, "when I see men required to perform ie impossible. That the duke assists wounded Prussian fficers robbed of their pay; that he lent the lion-hearted lücher four thousand dollars after the battle of Lübeck—at is what you call a conspiracy!—that seems to you a fit bject for reproach and accusation! Let us suppose that o-day misfortune befalls the grand army; what would a eneral or a field-marshal be worth in the emperor's eyes, ho would act precisely as our duke has acted under these rcumstances? I tell you the duke *shall* act as he acts! He *ust* act so! He would do great injustice if he ever acted herwise! Yes; and even were he thus to lose country nd subjects, crown and sceptre, like his ancestor, the unrtunate John; yet must he not deviate one hand's breadth om his noble manner of thinking, and from that which the ity of a man and a prince prescribes in the emergency. isfortune! What is misfortune? This is a misfortune—that prince should be compelled to endure such things from reigners. And if it came to the same pass with him as with s ancestor, Duke John; if his ruin were certain and irrevable, let not that dismay us: we will take our staff in our nds, and accompany our master in adversity, as old Lucas ranach did: we will never forsake him. The women and ildren when they meet us in the villages, will cast down

their eyes, and weep, and say to one another, 'That is o' Goethe, and the former Duke of Weimar, whom the Frenc Emperor drove from his throne, because he was so true to hi friends in misfortune; because he visited his uncle on hi death-bed; because he would not let his old comrades an brothers in arms starve!'"

"At this," adds Falk, "the tears rolled in streams down hi cheeks. After a pause, having recovered himself a little, h continued: 'I will sing for bread! I will turn strolling balla singer, and put our misfortunes into verse! I will wander int every village and into every school wherever the name o Goethe is known; I will chaunt the dishonour of Germany and the children shall learn the song of our shame till the are men; and thus they shall sing my master upon his thron again, and yours off his!'"

I shall have to recur to this outburst on a future occasion and will now hasten to the important event which is generall supposed to have been directly occasioned by the perils of th battle of Jena. I mean his marriage.

CHAPTER II

GOETHE'S WIFE

THE judgments of men are singular. No action in Aristotle' life subjected him to more calumny than his generous marriag with the friendless Phythia; no action in Goethe's life ha excited more scandal than his marriage with Christiane. I was thought disgraceful enough in him to have taken her int his house (a *liaison* out of the house seeming, in the eyes o the world, a venial error, which becomes serious directly i approaches nearer to the condition of marriage); but fo the great poet, the Geheimrath, actually to complete suc an enormity as to crown his connection with Christiane b a legal sanction, *this* was indeed more than society coul tolerate.

I have already expressed my opinion of this unfortunat connection, a *mésalliance* in every sense: but I must em phatically declare my belief that the redeeming point in it i precisely that which has created the scandal. Better far ha there been no connection at all; but if it was to be, the neare

approached a real marriage, and the further it was removed rom a fugitive indulgence, the more moral and healthy it ecame. The fact of the *mésalliance* was not to be got over. Had he married her at first, this would always have existed. But many other and darker influences would have been verted. There would have been no such "skeleton in the loset of his life" as, unfortunately, we know to have existed. Let us for a moment look into that closet.

Since we last caught a glimpse of Christiane Vulpius, some ifteen years have elapsed, in the course of which an unhappy hange has taken place. She was then a bright, lively, plea- ure-loving girl. Years and self-indulgence have now made avoc with her charms. The evil tendency, which youth and nimal spirits kept within excess, has asserted itself with a dis- inctness which her birth and circumstances may explain, if ot excuse, but which can only be contemplated in sadness. Her father, we know, ruined himself by intemperance; her rother impaired fine talents by similar excess; and Christiane, who inherited the fatal disposition, was not saved from it by he checks which refined society imposes, for in Weimar she as shut out from society by her relation to Goethe. Else- here, as we learn from her letters to Meyer, she was not quite xcluded from female society. Professor Wolff and Kapell- meister Reichardt present her to their daughters; and she ances at public balls. But in Weimar this was impossible. There she lived secluded, shunned; and had to devote herself holly to her domestic duties, which for one so lively and so ager for society must have had a depressing influence. Fond f gaiety, and especially of dancing, she was often seen at the udents' balls at Jena; and she accustomed herself to an dulgence in wine, which rapidly destroyed her beauty, and hich was sometimes the cause of serious domestic troubles. would fain have passed over this episode in silence; but it too generally known to be ignored; and it suggests a agedy in Goethe's life little suspected by those who saw how lmly he bore himself in public. The mere mention of such fact at once suggests the conflict of feelings hidden from ublic gaze; the struggle of indignation with pity, of resolu- on with weakness. I have discovered but one printed indi- tion of this domestic grief, and that is in a letter from chiller to Körner, dated 21st Oct. 1800: "On the whole he oduces very little now, rich as he still is in invention and ecution. His spirit is not sufficiently at ease; his wretched

domestic circumstances, which he is too weak to alter, mak him so unhappy."

Too weak to alter! Yes, there lies the tragedy, and the the explanation. Tender, and always shrinking from inflictin pain, he had not the sternness necessary to put an end to such condition. He suffered so much because he could not inflic suffering. To the bystander such endurance seems inexplic able; for the bystander knows not how the insidious first step are passed over, and how endurance strengthens with repeate trials; he knows not the hopes of a change which chec violent resolutions, nor how affection prompts and cherishe such hopes against all evidence. The bystander sees certai broad facts, which are inexplicable to him only because h does not see the many subtle links which bind those fact together; he does not see the mind of the sufferer struggling against a growing evil, and finally resigning itself, and tryin to put a calm face on the matter. It is easy for us to say Why did not Goethe part from her at once? But parting wa not easy. She was the mother of his child; she had bee the mistress of his heart, and still was dear to him. To par from her would not have arrested the fatal tendency; it woul only have accelerated it. He was too weak to alter his position He was strong enough to bear it. Schiller divined this b his own moral instincts. "I wish," he writes in a recently discovered letter, "that I could justify Goethe in respect t his domestic relations as I can confidently in all point respecting literature and social life. But unfortunately, b some false notions of domestic happiness, and an unluck aversion to marriage, he has entered upon an engagemen which weighs upon him in his domestic circle, and makes hin unhappy, yet to shake off which, I am sorry to say, he is to weak and soft-hearted. This is the only shortcoming in him but even this is closely connected with a very noble part o his character, and he hurts no one but himself."

And thus the years rolled on. Her many good qualitie absolved her few bad qualities. He was sincerely attache to her, and she was devoted to him; and now, in his fifty eighth year, when the troubles following the battle of Jen made him "feel the necessity of drawing all friends closer, who, among those friends, deserved a nearer place than Chris tiane? He resolved on marrying her.

It is not known whether this thought of marriage had fo some time previous been in contemplation, and was now pu

n execution when Weimar was too agitated to trouble itself ith his doings; or whether the desire of legitimising his son n these troublous days suggested the idea. Riemer thinks he motive was gratitude for her courageous and prudent conduct during the troubles; but I do not think that explanation cceptable, the more so as, according to her own statement, marriage was proposed in the early years of their acquaintnce. In the absence of positive testimony, I am disposed to ely on psychological evidence; and, assuming that the idea f marriage *had* been previously entertained, the delay in xecution is explicable when we are made aware of one pecuiarity in his nature, namely, a singular hesitation in adopting ny decisive course of action—singular, in a man so resolute nd imperious when once his decision had been made. This s the weakness of imaginative men. However strong the olition, when once it is set going, there is in men of active ntellects, and especially in men of imaginative, apprehenive intellects, a fluctuation of motives keeping the volition in beyance, which practically amounts to weakness; and is only listinguished from weakness by the strength of the voliion when let loose. Goethe, who was aware of this pecuarity, used to attribute it to his never having been placed in ircumstances which required prompt resolutions, and to his ot having educated his will; but I believe the cause lay much eeper, lying in the nature of psychological actions, not in the ccidents of education.

But be the cause of the delay this or any other, it is certain hat on the 19th of October, *i.e.* five days after the battle of ena, and *not*, as writers constantly report, "during the can onade," he was united to Christiane, in the presence of his on, and of his secretary, Riemer.

The scandal which this act of justice excited was immense, s may readily be guessed by those who know the world. Iis friends, however, loudly applauded his emergence from a lse position. From that time forward, no one who did not eat her with proper respect could hope to be well received y him. She bore her new-made honours unobtrusively, and ith a quiet good sense, which managed to secure the hearty oodwill of most of those who knew her.

CHAPTER III

BETTINA AND NAPOLEON

It is very characteristic that during the terror and the pillage of Weimar, Goethe's greatest anxiety on his own account was lest his scientific manuscripts should be destroyed. Wine, plate, furniture, could be replaced; but to lose his manuscripts was to lose what was irreparable. Herder's posthumous manuscripts *were* destroyed; Meyer lost everything, even his sketches; but Goethe lost nothing, except wine and money.[1]

The duke, commanded by Prussia to submit to Napoleon, laid down his arms and returned to Weimar, there to be received with the enthusiastic love of his people, as some compensation for the indignities he had endured. Peace was restored. Weimar breathed again. Goethe availed himself of the quiet to print the *Farbenlehre* and *Faust*, that they might be rescued from any future peril. He also began to meditate once more an epic on William Tell; but the death of the Duchess Amalia on the 10th April drove the subject from his mind.

On the 23rd of April Bettina came to Weimar. We must pause awhile to consider this strange figure, who fills a large space in the literary history of the nineteenth century than any other German woman. Every one knows "the Child" Bettina Brentano,—daughter of the Maximiliane Brentano with whom Goethe flirted at Frankfurt in the Werther days—wife of Achim von Arnim, the fantastic Romanticist—the worshipper of Goethe and Beethoven—for some time the privileged favourite of the King of Prussia—and writer of that wild, but unveracious book, *Goethe's Correspondence with a Child*. She is one of those phantasts to whom everything seems permitted. More elf than woman, yet with flashes of genius which light up in splendour whole chapters of nonsense, she defies criticism, and puts every verdict at fault. If you are grave with her, people shrug their shoulders, and saying "She is a Brentano," consider all settled. "At the

[1] It is at once ludicrous and sad to mention that even *this* has been the subject of malevolent sneers against him. His antagonists cannot forgive him the good fortune which saved *his* house from pillage, when the houses of others were ransacked. They seem to think it a mysterious result of his selfish calculations!

oint where the folly of others ceases the folly of the Brentanos egins," runs the proverb in Germany.

I do not wish to be graver with Bettina than the occasion emands; but while granting phantasy its widest license, hile grateful to her for the many picturesque anecdotes she as preserved from the conversation of Goethe's mother, I nust consider the history of her relation to Goethe seriously, ecause out of it has arisen a charge against his memory hich is very false and injurious. Many unsuspecting readers f her book, whatever they may think of the passionate expres- ions of her love for Goethe, whatever they may think of her emeanour towards him, on first coming into his presence, eel greatly hurt at his coldness; while others are still more ndignant with him for keeping alive this mad passion, feeding with poems and compliments, and doing this out of a selfish alculation, in order that *he might gather from her letters naterials for his poems!* In both these views there is complete nisconception of the actual case. True it is that the *Corre- pondence* furnishes ample evidence for both opinions; and gainst that evidence there is but one fact to be opposed, but ne fact is decisive: the *Correspondence* is a romance.

A harsher phrase would be applied were the offender a man, r not a Brentano, for the romance is put forward as bio- raphical fact; not as fiction playing around and among act. How much is true, how much exaggeration, and how nuch pure invention, I am in no position to explain. But Riemer, the old and trusted friend of Goethe, living in the ouse with him at the time of Bettina's arrival, has shown the *Correspondence* to be a "romance which has only borrowed rom reality the time, place, and circumstances;" and from ther sources I have learned enough to see both Goethe's onduct and her own in quite a different light from that resented in her work.

A young, ardent, elfin creature worships the great poet at a istance, writes to tell him so, is attentive to his mother, who ladly hears praises of her son, and is glad to talk of him. He struck with her extraordinary mind, is grateful to her for the ttentions to his mother, and writes as kindly as he can without ompromising himself. She comes to Weimar. She falls into is arms, and, according to her not very credible account, oes to sleep in his lap on their first interview; and is osten- atious of her adoration and her jealousy ever afterwards. If rue, the position was very embarrassing for Goethe: a man

aged fifty-eight worshipped by a girl who, though a woman
years, looked like a child, and worshipped with the extrav
gance, partly mad, and partly wilful, of a Brentano—*wh*
could he do? He could take a base advantage of h
passion; he could sternly repress it; or he could smile at i
and pat her head as one pats a whimsical, amusing chil
These three courses were open to him, and only these. H
adopted the last, until she forced him to adopt the second
forced him by the very impetuosity of her adoration. A
first the child's coquettish, capricious ways amused him; h
bright-glancing intellect interested him; but when her demo
strations became obtrusive and fatiguing, she had to be "calle
to order" so often, that at last his patience was fairly worn ou
The continuation of such a relation was obviously impossibl
She gave herself the license of a child, and would not be treate
as a child. She fatigued him.

Riemer relates that during this very visit she complained t
him of Goethe's coldness. This coldness, he rightly says, wa
simply patience; a patience which held out with difficult
against such assaults. Bettina quitted Weimar, to return i
1811, when by her own conduct she gave him a reasonabl
pretext for breaking off the connection; a pretext, I a
assured, he gladly availed himself of. It was this. She wer
one day with Goethe's wife to the Exhibition of Art, in whic
Goethe took great interest; and there her satirical remark
especially on Meyer, offended Christiane, who spoke sharpl
to her. High words rose, gross insult followed. Goeth
took the side of his insulted wife, and forbade Bettina th
house. It was in vain that on a subsequent visit to Weim
she begged Goethe to receive her. He was resolute. H
had put an end to a relation which could not be a friendshi
and was only an embarrassment.[1]

Such being the real story, as far as I can disentangle it, w
have now to examine the authenticity of the *Correspondence*, i
as far as it gives support to the two charges: 1st, of Goethe
alternate coldness and tenderness; 2nd, of his using her lette
as material for his poems. That he was ever tender to her,
denied by Riemer, who pertinently asks how we are to belie
that the coldness, of which she complained during her visit t

[1] I give this story as it was told me, by an authority quite unexceptionabl
nevertheless, in all such narratives there is generally some inaccuracy, ev
when relating to contemporary events, and the details above given may n
be absolutely precise, although the net result certainly is there expressed.

Veimar, grew in her absence into the lover-like warmth glowing in the sonnets addressed to her? This is not credible; but the mystery is explained by Riemer's distinct denial that the sonnets were addressed to her. They were *sent* to her, as to other friends; but the poems which she says were inspired by her, were in truth written for another. The proof is very simple. These sonnets were written before she came to Weimar, and had already passed through Riemer's hands, like other works, for his supervision. Riemer moreover knew to *whom* these passionate sonnets were addressed, although he did not choose to name her. I have no such cause for concealment, and declare the sonnets to have been addressed to Minna Herzlieb, of whom we shall hear more presently; as indeed the charade on her name, which closes the series (*Herz-Lieb*), plainly indicates. Not only has Bettina appropriated the sonnets which were composed at Jena while Riemer was with Goethe, and inspired by one living at Jena, but she has also appropriated poems known by Riemer to have been written in 1813–19, she then being the wife of Achim von Arnim, and having since 1811 been resolutely excluded from Goethe's house. To shut your door against a woman, and yet write love verses to her; to respond so coldly to her demonstrations that she complains of it, and yet pour forth sonnets throbbing with passion, is a course of conduct certainly not credible on evidence such as the *Correspondence with a Child.* Hence we are the less surprised to find Riemer declaring that some of her letters are "little more than metaand para- phrases of Goethe's poems, *in which both rhythm and rhyme are still traceable.*" So that instead of Goethe turning her letters into poems, Riemer accuses her of turning Goethe's poems into her letters. An accusation so public and so explicit—an accusation which ruined the whole authenticity of the *Correspondence*—should at once have been answered. The production of the originals with their post marks might have silenced accusers. But the accusation has been fourteen years before the world, and no answer attempted.

Although the main facts had already been published, a perfect uproar followed the first appearance of this chapter in Germany. Some ardent friend of Bettina's opened fire upon me in a pamphlet,[1] which called forth several replies in news-

[1] *An G. H. Lewes: Eine Epistel von Heinrich Siegfried.* Berlin, 1858.

papers and journals;[1] and I believe there are few Germa who now hesitate to acknowledge that the whole correspondenc has been so tampered with as to have become, from first last, a romance. For the sake of any still unconvinced partisa in England, a few evidences of the manipulation which th correspondence has undergone may not be without interest.

In the letter bearing date 1st March 1807, we read of t King of Westphalia's court, when, unless History be a liar, t kingdom of Westphalia was not even in existence. Goethe mother, in another letter, speaks of her delight at Napoleon appearance,—four months before she is known to have s eyes upon him. The letters of Goethe, from November September, all imply that he was at Weimar; nay, he invit her to Weimar on the 16th July; she arrives there at the en of the month; visits him, and on the 16th August he writ to her from thence. Düntzer truly says, that these letters *mu* be spurious, since Goethe left for Karlsbad on the 25th Ma and did not return till September. Not only does Betti visit Goethe at Weimar at a time when he is known to ha been in Bohemia; but she actually receives letters from h mother dated the 21st Sept. and 7th Oct. 1808, although th old lady died on the 13th Sept. One may overlook Bettina intimating that she was only thirteen, when the parish regist proves her to have been two-and-twenty; but it is impossib to place the slightest reliance on the veracity of a book whi exhibits flagrant and careless disregard of facts; and if I ha been somewhat merciless in the exposure of this fabricatio it is because it has greatly helped to disseminate very false vie respecting a very noble nature.

In conclusion, it is but necessary to add that, Bettina's wo thus deprived of its authenticity, all those hypotheses whi have been built on it respecting Goethe's conduct, fall to t ground. Indeed, when one comes to think of it, the hypothe of his using her letters as poetic materials does seem t wildest of all figments; for not only was he prodigal in i vention and inexhaustible in material, but he was especia remarkable for always expressing his own feelings, his own e perience, not the feelings and experience of others.

We part here from Bettina; another and very differe figure enters on the scene: Napoleon at the Congress Erfurt. It was in September 1808 that the meeting of t

[1] See in particular the article by DUENTZER: *Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 1858.

Emperors of France and Russia, with all the minor potentates orming the *cortège*, took place at the little town of Erfurt, a ew miles from Weimar. It was a wonderful sight. The heatre was opened with Talma and the Parisian troupe perorming the finest tragedies of France before a parterre of Kings. "Exactly in front of the pit sat the two emperors, n arm-chairs, in familiar conversation; a little in their rear, he kings; and then the reigning princes and hereditary rinces. Nothing was seen in the whole pit but uniforms, tars, and orders. The lower boxes were filled with staff fficers and the most distinguished persons of the imperial ureaux; the upper front with princesses; and at their sides oreign ladies. A strong guard of grenadiers of the imperial uard was posted at the entrance. On the arrival of either mperor the drum beat thrice; on that of any king, twice. On one occasion the sentinel, deceived by the outside of the King of Würtemburg's carriage, ordered the triple salute to e given, on which the officer in command cried out, in an ngry tone, *Taisez-vous—ce n'est qu'un roi!*"[1]

Napoleon, on this occasion, gave a friendly reception to he Duke of Weimar, and to Goethe and Wieland, with whom e talked about literature and history. Goethe went to Erfurt n the 29th of September, and that evening saw *Andromaque* erformed. On the 30th, there was a grand dinner given by he duke, and in the evening *Britannicus* was performed. In he *Moniteur* of the 8th of October he is mentioned among he illustrious guests: "Il paraît apprécier parfaitement nos cteurs, et admirer surtout les chefs-d'œuvre qu'ils représennt." On the 2nd of October he was summoned to an udience with the emperor, and found him at breakfast, alleyrand and Daru standing by his side; Berthier and avary behind. Napoleon, after a fixed look, exclaimed: *Vous êtes un homme;*" a phrase which produced a profound mpression on the flattered poet. "How old are you?" asked e Emperor. "Sixty." "You are very well preserved." fter a pause—"You have written tragedies?" Here Daru terposed, and spoke with warmth of Goethe's works, adding at he had translated Voltaire's *Mahomet*. "It is not a good ece," said Napoleon, and commenced a critique on *Mahomet*, pecially on the unworthy portrait given of that conqueror of world. He then turned the conversation to *Werther*, which

[1] Kanzler von Müller in Mrs. AUSTIN'S *Germany from* 1760 *to* 1814, p. 307.

he had read seven times, and which accompanied him t Egypt. "After various remarks, all very just," says Goeth "he pointed out a passage and asked me why I had writte so: it was contrary to Nature. This opinion he develope with great clearness. I listened calmly, and smilingly replie that I did not know whether the objection had ever been mac before, but that I found it perfectly just. The passage wa unnatural; but perhaps the poet might be pardoned for th artifice which enabled him to reach his end in an easie simpler way. The Emperor seemed satisfied and returned t the drama, and criticised it like a man who has studied th tragic stage with the attention of a criminal judge, and wh was keenly alive to the fault of the French in departing fro Nature. He disapproved of all pieces in which fate played part. 'Ces pièces appartiennent à une époque obscure. A reste, que veulent-ils dire avec leur fatalité? La politique e la fatalité.'"

The interview lasted nearly an hour. Napoleon inquire after his children and family; was very gracious; and wound u almost every sentence with *qu'en dit M. Goet?* As Goeth left the room, Napoleon repeated to Berthier and Daru, *Voil un homme!*

A few days after, Napoleon was in Weimar, and grea festivities were set on foot to honour him; among them *chasse* on the battle-field of Jena; a grand ball at court; an *La Mort de César* at the theatre, with Talma as Brutus. Du ing the ball, Napoleon talked at great length with Goethe an Wieland. Speaking of ancient and modern literature, Napoleo touched on Shakspeare, whom he was too French to compre hend, and said to Goethe: "Je suis étonné qu'un grand espri comme vous, n'aime pas les genres tranchés." Goethe migh have replied that *les grands esprits* have almost universally bee the very reverse of *tranchés* in their tastes; but of course it wa not for him to controvert the emperor. As Johnson said o a similar occasion: "Sir, it was not for me to bandy word with my sovereign." After speaking magniloquently of tragedy Napoleon told him he ought to write a *Death of Cæsar*, bu in a grander style than the tragedy of Voltaire. "Ce trava pourrait devenir la principale tâche de votre vie. Dans cet tragédie il faudrait montrer au monde comment César aura pu faire le bonheur de l'humanité si on lui avait laissé le temp d'exécuter ses vastes plans." One cannot help thinking Goethe's early scheme to write *Julius Cæsar*, and how entirel

pposed it would have been to the *genre tranché* so admired
y Napoleon.

A proposition more acceptable than that of writing tragedies
: his age, was that of accompanying Napoleon to Paris.
Venez à Paris, je l'exige de vous; là vous trouverez un cercle
us vaste pour votre esprit d'observation; là vous trouverez
es matières immenses pour vos créations poétiques." He
ad never seen a great capital like Paris or London, and there
as something very tempting in this invitation. F. von Müller
ys he often spoke with him on the probable expense of the
urney, and of the Parisian usages; but the inconvenience
so long a journey (in those days), and his own advanced
e, seemed to have checked his desire.

On the 14th of October he and Wieland received the cross
the Legion of Honour—then an honour; and the two
mperors quitted Erfurt. Goethe preserved complete silence
n all that had passed between him and Napoleon. Indeed
nen he recorded the interviews, many years later, in the annals
his life, he did so in the most skeleton-like manner. To
e oft-repeated question, What was the passage in *Werther*
dicated by Napoleon as contrary to Nature, he always re-
rned a playful answer, referring the questioner to the book,
which to exercise his own ingenuity in discovery. He
ould not even tell Eckermann. He was fond, in this later
riod of his life, of playing hide-and-seek with readers, and
joyed their efforts to unravel mysteries. The present
ystery has been cleared up by the Chancellor von Müller,
whom we owe most of the details respecting this Napoleon
terview. The objection raised by Napoleon was none other
an the objection raised by Herder (see p. 291) when *Werther*
s revised by him in 1782,—viz. that Werther's melancholy,
ich leads him to suicide, instead of proceeding solely from
strated love, is complicated by his frustrated ambition.
erder thought this a fault in art, Napoleon thought it con-
ry to Nature; and, strange to say, Goethe agreed with both,
d altered his work in obedience to Herder's criticism, though
forgot all about it when Napoleon once more brought the
jection forward. Against Herder, Napoleon, and Goethe
nself, it is enough to oppose the simple fact: Werther (*i.e.*
rusalem) *was* suffering from frustrated ambition, as well as
m frustrated love; and what Goethe found him, that he
de him. We have only to turn to Kestner's letter, de-
ibing Jerusalem and his unhappy story, to see that Goethe,

in *Werther*, followed with the utmost fidelity the narrati which was given him. This anecdote affords a piquant co mentary on the value of criticism: three men so illustrious Napoleon, Goethe, and Herder, pointing to a particular tre ment of a subject as contrary to Art and contrary to Nature; t treatment being all the while strictly in accordance with Natu

That he was extremely flattered by the attentions Napoleon has been the occasion of a loud outcry from tho who, having never been subjected to any flattery of this natu find it very contemptible. But the attentions of a Napole were enough to soften in their flattery even the sternness of republican; and Goethe, no republican, was all his life ve susceptible to the gratification which a Frankfurt citizen mu feel in receiving the attention of crowned heads. There infinite insincerity uttered on this subject; and generally t outcry is loudest from men who would themselves be mo dazzled by court favour of any kind. To hear them talk Goethe's servility and worship of rank, one might fancy th they stood on a moral elevation, looking down upon him wi a superior pity which in some sort compensated their infe ority of intellect. There is one anecdote which they are ve fond of quoting, and which I will therefore give, that we m calmly consider what is its real significance. Beethoven, writi to Bettina in 1812, when he made Goethe's acquaintance Töplitz, says: "Kings and princes can to be sure mak professors, privy councillors, &c., and confer titles and orde but they cannot make great men—minds which rise above t common herd—these they must not pretend to make, a therefore must these be held in honour. When two me such as Goethe and I, come together, even the high a mighty perceive what is to be considered great in men like u Yesterday, on our way home, we met the whole imper family. We saw them coming from a distance, and Goet separated from me to stand aside: say what I would, I cou not make him advance another step. *I pressed my hat dow upon my head, buttoned up my great coat, and walked wi folded arms through the thickest of the throng.* Princes a pages formed a line, the Archduke Rudolph took off his h and the empress made the first salutation. Those gent know me. I saw to my real amusement the procession f past Goethe. He stood aside with his hat off, bending low I rallied him smartly for it; I gave him no quarter."[1]

[1] SCHINDLER'S *Life of Beethoven*, edited by Moscheles, vol. i. pp. 133–5

This anecdote is usually quoted as evidence of Beethoven's dependence and Goethe's servility. A very little consideration will make us aware that Beethoven was ostentatiously rude in the assertion of his independence, and that Goethe was simply acting on the dictates of common courtesy, in standing aside and taking off his hat, as all Germans do when royalty passes them. It is as much a matter of courtesy to stand still, and take off the hat, when a royal personage passes in carriage or on foot, as it is to take off the hat when an acquaintance passes. Beethoven might choose to ignore all such courtesies; indeed his somewhat eccentric nature could not move in conventional orbits; and his disregard of such courtesies might be pardoned as the caprices of an eccentric nature; but Goethe was a man of the world, a man of courtesies, and a minister; to have folded his arms, and pressed down his hat upon his head, would have been a rudeness at variance with his nature, his education, his position, and his sense of propriety.

It is possible, nay probable, that the very education Goethe had received may have given to his salutation a more elaborate air than was noticeable in other bystanders. In bowing, he may have bowed very low, with a certain formality of respect; but I have no wish to deny that he did lay stress on conventional distinctions. Not only was he far from republican sternness, but he placed more value on his star and title of Excellency than his thorough-going partisans are willing to admit. If that be a weakness, let him be credited with it; but if he were as vain of such puerilities as an English duke of the Garter, I do not see any cause for serious reproach in him.

So few poets have been Excellencies, so few have worn stars on their breasts, that we have no means of judging whether Goethe's vanity was greater or less than we have a right to expect. Meanwhile it does seem to me that sneers at his title, and epigrams on his stars, come with a very bad grace from a nation which is laughed at for nothing more frequently than for its inordinate love of titles. Nor are Englishmen so remarkable for their indifference to rank, as to make them the fittest censors of this weakness in a Goethe.

CHAPTER IV

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES

Among the Jena friends whom Goethe saw with constant pleasu was Frommann, the bookseller, in whose family there was a adopted child, by name Minna Herzlieb, strangely interesting us as the original of Ottilie in the *Wahlverwandtschaften.* A a child she had been a great pet of Goethe's; growing int womanhood, she exercised a fascination over him which h reason in vain resisted. The disparity of years was great: b how frequently are young girls found bestowing the bloom their affections on men old enough to be their fathers! an how frequently are men at an advanced age found tremblin with the passion of youth! In the Sonnets addressed to he and in the novel of *Elective Affinities*, may be read the fervou of his passion, and the strength with which he resisted i Speaking of this novel, he says: "No one can fail to recognis in it a deep passionate wound which shrinks from being close by healing, a heart which dreads to be cured. . . . In it, as i a burial-urn, I have deposited with deep emotion many a sa experience. The 3rd of October 1809 (when the publicatio was completed) set me free from the work: but the feelings embodies can never quite depart from me." If we knew much of the circumstances out of which grew the *Electi Affinities* as we do of those out of which grew *Werther*, w should find his experience as clearly embodied in this novel it is in *Werther;* but conjecture in such cases being perilou I will not venture beyond the facts which have been placed my disposal; and may only add therefore that the growin attachment was seen by all with pain and dismay. At leng it was resolved to send Minna to school,[1] and this absolu separation saved them both.

It is very curious to read *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* by th light; to see not only the sources of its inspiration, but th way in which Goethe dramatises the two halves of his ow character. Eduard and Charlotte loved each other in yout Circumstances separated them; and each made a *maria de convenance* from which, after a time, they were releas

[1] In the novel, Ottilie also is sent back to school.

y death. The widower and the widow, now free to choose, aturally determine on fulfilling the dream of their youth. hey marry. At the opening of the story we see them placidly appy. Although a few quiet touches make us aware of a ertain disparity between their natures not enough to create nhappiness, but enough to prevent perfect sympathy, the eenest eye would detect no signs which threatened the enuring stability of their happiness. Eduard has a friend, lmost a brother, always called "The Captain," whom he ıvites to come and live with them. Charlotte strongly oposes this visit at first, having a dim presentiment of evil; ut she yields, the more so as she desires that her adopted aughter, Ottilie, should now be taken from school, and come o live with them.

Thus are the four actors in the drama brought together n the stage; and no sooner are they brought together, than ıe natural *elective affinities* of their natures come into play. harlotte and the Captain are drawn together; Eduard and ttilie are drawn together. This is shown to be as inevitable s the chemical combinations which give the novel its title. real episode in the tragedy of life is before us; felt to be evitable; felt to be terrible; felt also to present a dilemma the moral judgment, on which two parties will pronounce vo opposite opinions.

Those critics who look at human life, and consequently at rt, from the abstract point of view, who, disregarding fact and ecessity, treat human nature as a chess-board on which any oves may be made which the player chooses, the player mself being considered an impersonal agent untroubled by shness, incapable of overlooking what is palpable to the vstanders,—those critics, I say, will unhesitatingly pronounce e situation an immoral situation, which the poet should not ıve presented, and which in real life would at once have been ıt an end to by the idea of Duty.

Others, again, who look at life as it *is*, not as it might be; ıo accept its wondrous complexity of impulses, and demand at Art should represent reality—consider this situation as rribly true, and although tragic, by no means immoral; for e tragedy lies in the collision of Passion with Duty—of ıpulse with Social Law. Suppose Charlotte and Eduard ımarried, and these "affinities" would have been simple pulses to marriage. But the fact of marriage stands as a rrier to the impulses: the collision is inevitable.

The divergence of opinion, here indicated, must necessarily exist among the two great classes of readers. Accordingly in Germany and in England the novel is alternately pronounced immoral and profoundly moral. I do not think it is either the one or the other. When critics rail at it, and declare it saps the whole foundation of marriage, and when critics enthusiastically declare it is profoundly moral because it sets the sacredness of marriage in so clear a light, I see that both have drawn certain general conclusions from an individual case; but I do not see that they have done more than put *their* interpretations on what the author had no intention of being interpreted at all. Every work of Art has its moral, says Hegel; but the *moral depends on him that draws it.* Both the conclusion against marriage, and the conclusion in favour of marriage, may therefore be drawn from this novel; and yet neither conclusion be correct—except as the private interpretation of the reader. Goethe was an Artist, not an Advocate: he painted a true picture, and because he painted it truly, he necessarily presented it in a form which would permit men to draw from it those opposite conclusions which might be drawn from the reality itself. Suppose the story actually to have passed before our eyes, the judgments passed on it, even among those thoroughly acquainted with all the facts, would have been diametrically opposite. It is not difficult to write a story carrying the moral legible in every page; and if the writer's object be primarily that of illustrating a plain moral he need not trouble himself about truth of character. And for this reason: he employs character as a *means* to an end; he does not make the delineation of character his end; his purpose is didactic, not artistic. Quite otherwise is the artist's purpose and practice: for him human life is the end and aim; for him the primary object is character, which is, as all know, of a mingled woof, good and evil, virtue and weakness, truth and falsehood, woven inextricably together.

Those who object to such pictures, and think that truth has no warrant, may reasonably consider Goethe blamable for having chosen the subject. But he chose it because he had experienced it. And once grant him the subject, it is difficult to blame his treatment of it, as regards the social problem. He did his utmost to present this truthfully.

There is, it is true, one scene, which, although true to nature, profoundly true, is nevertheless felt to be objectionable on moral and æsthetical grounds. The artist is not justified in

ainting every truth; and if we in this nineteenth century often arry our exclusion of subjects to the point of prudery, that rror is a virtue compared with the demoralising license exibited in French literature. The scene I refer to has probably oused more indignation against the *Wahlverwandtschaften* than ll the rest of the book.

It is a painful story. Two of the actors represent Passion n its absorbing, reckless, irresistible fervour, rushing onwards o the accomplishment of its aims. The two other actors epresent with equal force, and with touching nobleness, the lea of Duty. Eduard and Ottilie love rapidly, vehemently, houghtlessly. Not a doubt troubles them. Their feeling is o natural, it so completely absorbs them, that they are like wo children entering on a first affection. But, vividly as they epresent Instinct, Charlotte and the Captain as vividly repreent Reason; their love is equally profound, but it is the love f two rational beings, who, because they reason, reason on the rcumstances in which they are placed; recognise society, its rrangements and its laws; and sacrifice their own desires to is social necessity. They subdue themselves; upheld by onscience they face suffering; Conscience dictates to them a ne of conduct never dreamt of by the passionate Eduard, and ut vaguely apprehended by Ottilie.

Eduard no sooner knows that he is loved than he is impatient for a divorce, which will enable him to marry Ottilie, nd enable Charlotte to marry the Captain. Unfortunately harlotte, who has hitherto had no children by Eduard, feels at she is about to be a mother. This complicates a position nich before was comparatively simple. Childless, she might adily have consented to a divorce; she cannot now. Every gument fails to persuade Eduard to relinquish the one purose of his life; and he only consents to test by absence the rability of his passion.

He joins the army, distinguishes himself in the field, and turns with desires as imperious as ever. Meanwhile the aptain has also absented himself. Charlotte bears her fate, eekly, nobly. Ottilie in silence cherishes her love for Eduard, d devotes herself with intense affection to Charlotte's child. is child, in accordance with a popular superstition (which, the way, physiology emphatically discredits), resembles in triking manner both Ottilie and the Captain, thus physically ifying the passion felt by Eduard for Ottilie, and the passion t by Charlotte for the Captain.

Charlotte, who is strong enough to bear her fate, never relinquishes the hope that Eduard will learn to accept his with like fortitude. But he remains immovable. Opposition only intensifies his desire. At length the child is drowned while under Ottilie's charge. In the depth of her affliction a light breaks in upon her soul; and now, for the first time, Ottilie becomes conscious of being wrong in her desire to be Eduard's wife. With this consciousness comes a resolution never to be his. The tragedy deepens. She wastes away. Eduard, whose passion was his life, lingers awhile in mute sorrow, and then is laid to rest by her side.

Such, in its leading motives, is the terribly tragic drama which Goethe has worked out with indefatigable minuteness in *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. The story moves slowly, as in life, through various episodes and circumstances; but if slow it is always intelligible.

We need only a hint of the origin of this story to read in it how Goethe has represented himself under the two different masks of the impulsive Eduard, and the reasonable strong-willed Captain. These characters are drawn from the life drawn from himself. Considered only as characters in a novel they are masterly creations. Eduard—weak, passionate, and impatient—still preserves our interest even in his weakest moments. How admirable a touch is that where, in the early uneasiness of his position, he hears of the Captain's having criticised his flute playing, and "at once feels himself freed from every obligation of duty"! It is precisely these passionate natures which leap at any excuse, no matter how frivolous that they may give them the semblance of justification. Charlotte and the Captain stand as representatives of Duty and Reason, in contrast with Ottilie and Eduard, who represent Impulse and Imagination; in the two reasonable personages Goethe has achieved the rare success of making reason lovable.

Rosenkrantz has noticed how well the various forms of marriage are represented in this novel. Eduard and Charlotte each tried *mariage de convenance;* they then tried a *marriage of friendship;* if the former was unhappy, the latter was no sufficing: it was not the *marriage of love.* Moreover, in the *liaison* of the count and the baroness, we see marriage as it is so often found in the world—as a mere convention conventionally respected. Hence the count is painted as a frivolous careless man of fashion, who plays with St. Simonian

heories, and thinks marriage ought to be an apprenticeship erminable every five years.

Besides such points, the critic will note admiringly how the haracters present themselves in thought, speech, and act, ithout any description or explanation from the author. The hole representation is so objective, so simple, and the march f the story is so quiet, moving amid such familiar details, that xcept in the masterpieces of Miss Austen, I know not where o look for a comparison. And if English and French readers ometimes feel a little wearied by the many small details which ncumber the march of the story, and irritate the curiosity hich is impatient for the dénouement, no such weariness is elt by German readers, who enjoy the details, and the purpose hich they are supposed to serve. A dear friend of mine, hose criticism is always worthy of attention, thinks that the ng episodes which interrupt the progress of the story during ne interval of Eduard's absence and return, are artistic devices or impressing the reader with a sense of the slow movement f life; and, in truth, it is only in fiction that the dénouement sually lies close to the exposition. I give this opinion, for ne reader's consideration; but it seems to me more ingenious nan just. I must confess that the stress Goethe lays on the nprovements of the park, the erection of the moss hut, the storation of the chapel, the making of new roads, &c., is out f all proportion, and somewhat tedious. Julian Schmidt calls ttention to the inartistic device of dragging in pages of de- ached aphorisms and reflections on life under the pretence f their being extracts from Ottilie's journal. The pretence f a connection—namely, the "red thread"—which is to run hrough these extracts, and exhibit the development of her eelings, is entirely lost sight of, and instead of the feelings of n impassioned girl, we have the thoughts of an old man. he original intention was simply to write a *novelle*, a little le; and for that there was abundant material. In expanding ne *novelle* into a novel, he has spoiled a masterpiece. Indeed, must frankly say that, either from want of constructive in- inct, or from an indolent and haughty indifference towards ne public, his novels are quite unworthy of a great artist in oint of *composition*. He seems to have regarded them as ehicles for the expression of certain views, rather than as rganic wholes.

The style of *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* is greatly admired y Germans; Rosenkrantz pronounces it classical. We must

remember, however, that Germany is not rich in works written with the perfection which France and England demand; we must remember, moreover, that most German opinions on Goethe are to be received with the same caution as English opinions about Shakspeare; and bearing these two facts in mind, we shall lend a more willing ear to those native critics who do not regard the style of the *Wahlverwandtschaften* as classical. It is a delicate point for a foreigner to venture on an opinion in such a case; and if I wrote for Germans I should simply quote the current verdict; but writing for Englishmen who read German, there may be less temerity in alluding to the signs of age which the style of this novel betrays. Englishmen comparing this prose with the prose of his earlier works, or with the standard of admirable prose—and so great a writer must only be measured by the highest standards—will find it often weak, cold, mechanical in the construction of its sentences, and somewhat lifeless in the abstractness of its diction. There is also a fatiguing recurrence of certain set forms of phrase. Passages of great beauty there are, touches of poetry no reader will overlook. The last chapter is a poem. Its pathos is so simple that one needs to be in robust mood to read it. The page also where Charlotte and the Captain are on the lake together under the faint light of appearing stars, is a poem the music of which approaches that of verse.

CHAPTER V

POLITICS AND RELIGION

MINNA HERZLIEB, to whom we owe the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, lived to be a happy wife. Goethe long carried the arrow in his heart. In 1810, he once more gave poetic expression to his experience in an erotic poem, setting forth the conflict of Love and Duty. The nature of this poem, however, prevented its publication, and it still exists only as a manuscript. In this year also he commenced his *Autobiography*, the first part of which appeared in 1811. The public, anxious for autobiography, received it with a disappointment which is perfectly intelligible. Charming as the book is in every other respect, it is tantalising to a reader curious to see the great poet in his youth.

Before writing this *Autobiography* he had to outlive the

orrow for his mother's death. She died on the 13th of eptember 1808, in her 78th year. To the last, her love or her son, and his for her, had been the glory and sustainent of her happy old age. He had wished her to come nd live with him at Weimar; but the circle of old Frankfurt iends, and the influence of old habits, kept her in her native ty, where she was venerated by all.

A volume would be required to record with anything like ulness the details of the remaining years. There is no deciency of material: in his letters, and the letters of friends nd acquaintances, will be found an ample gleaning; but nhappily the materials are abundant precisely at the point here the interest of the story begins to fade. From sixty to ghty-two is a long period; but it is not a period in which ersons and events influence a man; his character, already eveloped, can receive no new direction. At this period iography is at an end, and necrology begins. For Germans, ie details to which I allude have interest; but the English ader would receive with mediocre gratitude a circumstantial arrative of all Goethe did and studied; all the excursions he ade; every cold and toothache which afflicted him; every erson he conversed with.[1]

I may mention, however, his acquaintance with Beethoven, account of the undying interest attached to the two names. hey were together for a few days at Töplitz, with the most ofound admiration for each other's genius. The biographer Beethoven adds: "But though Beethoven has praised oethe's patience with him (on account of his deafness), still is a fact, that the great poet, and minister, too soon forgot e great composer; and when, in 1823, he had it in his wer to render him an essential service with little trouble to mself, he did not even deign to reply to a very humble istle from our master." This is the way accusations are ade; this is the kind of evidence on which they are believed. he only *facts* here established are, that Beethoven wrote to oethe, and that Goethe did not reply. Beethoven's letter quested Goethe to recommend the grand-duke to subscribe his Mass. It was doubtless very mortifying not to receive reply; such things always are mortifying, and offended self-ve is apt to suggest bad motives for the offence. But a

[1] The period which is included in this Seventh Book occupies no less than 563 ges of Viehoff's Biography; yet, while I have added a great many details those collected by Viehoff, I do not think any of interest have been omitted.

bystander, knowing how many motives may actuate the con duct, and unwilling to suppose a bad motive for which ther is no evidence, will at once see that the inferences of Goethe "not deigning to reply," and of having "forgotten the grea composer," are by no means warranted by the facts. W know that Goethe was naturally of an active benevolence; w know that he was constantly recommending to the grand duke some object of charitable assistance; we know that h profoundly admired Beethoven, and had no cause to b offended with him; and, knowing this, we must accept an interpretation of the fact of silence in preference to that whic the angry Beethoven, and his biographer, have inferred.

To pursue our narrative: The year 1813, which began th War of Independence, was to Goethe a year of troubles. began with an affliction—the death of his old friend Wieland which shook him more than those who knew him best wer prepared for. Herder; Schiller; the Duchess Amalia; h Mother; and now Wieland,—one by one had fallen awa and left him lonely, advancing in years.

Nor was this the only source of unhappiness. Politica troubles came to disturb his plans. Germany was risin against the tyranny of Napoleon; rising, as Goethe though in vain. "You will not shake off your chains," he said t Körner, "the man is too powerful; you will only press ther deeper into your flesh." His doubts were shared by many but happily the nation shared them not. While patriots wer rousing the wrath of the nation into the resistance of despai he tried to "escape from the present, because it is impossibl to live in such circumstances and not go mad;" he too refuge, as he always did, in Art. He wrote the ballads *De Todtentanz*, *Der getreue Eckart*, and *die wandelnde Glocke* wrote the essay *Shakspeare und kein Ende*, and finished th third volume of his *Autobiography*. He buried himself i the study of Chinese history. Nay, on the very day of th battle of Leipsic, he wrote the epilogue to the tragedy *Essex*, for the favourite actress, Madame Wolf.[1]

Patriotic writers are unsparing in sarcasms on a man wh could thus seek refuge in Poetry from the bewildering trouble of politics, and they find no other explanation than that h was an Egoist. Other patriotic writers, among them some

[1] Curiously enough, on that very day of Napoleon's first great defeat, h medallion, which was hung on the wall of Goethe's study, fell from its nail to the ground.

ra republicanism, such as Karl Grün, have eloquently de-ided him. I do not think it necessary to add arguments those already suggested respecting his relation to politics. ose who are impatient with him for being what he was, and t what they are, will listen to no arguments. It is needless point out how, at sixty-four, he was not likely to become a litician, having up to that age sedulously avoided politics. It needless to show that he was not in a position which called on him to *do* anything. The grievance seems to be that he ote no war songs, issued no manifestoes, but strove to keep mself as much as possible out of the hearing of contemporary story. If this was a crime, the motive was not criminal. dge the act as you will, but do not misjudge the motive. o attribute such an act to cowardice, or fear of compromising mself, is unwarrantable, in the face of all the evidence we ve of his character.

When the mighty Napoleon threatened the grand-duke, we ve seen how Goethe was roused. That was an individual justice, which he could clearly understand, and was prepared combat. For the Duke he would turn ballad-singer; for e Nation he had no voice; and why? Because there was no ation. He saw clearly then, what is now seen clearly, that ermany had no existence as a Nation: it was a geographical tion; and such it remains in our day. And he failed to see at is now clearly seen, that the German Peoples were, for e time, united by national enthusiasm, united by a common eling of hatred against France; failing to see this, he thought at a collection of disunited Germans was certain to be de-oyed in a struggle with Napoleon. He was wrong; the ent has proved his error; but his error of opinion must not made an accusation against his sincerity. When Luden the storian, whose testimony is the weightier because it is that a patriot, had that interview with him, after the battle of ipsic, which he has recorded with so much feeling,[1] the pression left was, he says, "that I was deeply convinced ey are in grievous error who blame Goethe for a want of e of country, a want of German feeling, a want of faith in e German people, or of sympathy with its honour and shame, fortune or misery. His silence about great events was nply a painful resignation, to which he was necessarily led his position and his knowledge of mankind." Luden came him to speak of a projected journal, the *Nemesis*, which was

[1] *Luden's Rückblicke in mein Leben*, p. 113 *sq.*

to excite the nation's hatred of France. Goethe dissuad him. "Do not believe," he said, after a pause, "that I am different to the great ideas—Freedom, Fatherland, and Peop No; these ideas are in us; they form a portion of our bei which no one can cast off. Germany is dear to my heart. have often felt a bitter pain at the thought that the Germa people, so honourable as individuals, should be so miserab as a whole. A comparison of the German people with oth peoples awakens a painful feeling, which I try to escape any way I can; and in Art and Science I have found suc escapes; *for they belong to the world at large, and before the vanish all the limits of nationality.* But this consolation after all but a poor one, and is no compensation for the prou conviction that one belongs to a great, strong, honoured, an dreaded people." He spoke also of Germany's future, but h saw that this future was still far distant. "For us, meanwhil this alone remains: let every one, according to his talent according to his tendencies and according to his position, *his utmost to increase the culture and development of the peop* to strengthen and widen it on all sides, that the people ma not lag behind other peoples, but may become competent f every great action when the day of its glories arrives." Ve wise words, however unpalatable to enthusiastic patriotism Turning from such abstract considerations to the question the journal, and the probability of "awakening" the Germa People to Freedom. "But *is* the people awakened?" h continued. "Does it know what it wants and what it wills Have you forgotten what that honest Philister in Jena said his neighbour, as in his joy he called out, that the Frenc were departed, and his rooms were ready for the receptio of the Russians? The sleep has been too deep for a me shaking to alter it. And is every agitation an elevation? W are not now considering the cultivated youth, but the man the millions. And what will be won? Freedom, you sa but perhaps it would be more correct to call it a setting free- *not, however, a setting free from the yoke of foreigners, but fro a foreign yoke.* True, I no longer see Frenchmen, no long see Italians; but *in their place I see Cossacks, Baschkirs, Croa Magyars and other Hussars.*"

He who thought thus, was not likely to be found among th enthusiasts of that day, had he been at the age of enthusiasm But, as he said to Eckermann, who alluded to the reproach against him for not having written war songs, "How could

ke up arms without hatred, and how could I hate without uth? If such an emergency had befallen me when twenty ars old, I should certainly not have been the last; but it ınd me past sixty. Besides we cannot all serve our country the same way, but each does his best according as God has dowed him. I have toiled hard enough during half a century. can say, that in those things which nature has appointed for y daily work, I have permitted myself no relaxation or repose, t have always striven, investigated, and done as much, and well, as I could. If every one can say the same of himself, will prove well with all. To write military songs, and sit in room! That forsooth was my duty! To have written them the bivouac when the horses at evening's outposts are ard neighing at night, would have been well enough; that ıs not my way of life nor my business, but that of Theodore örner. His war songs suit him perfectly. But to me, who ı not of a warlike nature, and who have no warlike sense, ır songs would have been a mask which would have fitted y face very badly. I have never affected anything in my etry. I have never uttered anything which I have not exrienced, and which has not urged me to production. I have ly composed love songs when I have loved; and how could vrite songs of hatred without hating?"

Connected with this political indifference, and mainly the use of it, was his earnestness in Art; an earnestness which s been made the evidence of this most extraordinary charge ainst him, namely, that he "looked on life only as an artist." ıe shallow phrase has become stereotyped. Every one has ard it who has heard anything of him. It is uttered with e confidence of conviction, and is meant to convey a volume implicit reprobation. When a man devotes himself to a ecial science, gives to it the greater part of his time, his oughts and sympathies, we marvel at his energy, and laud passionate devotion; we do not make his earnestness a me; we do not say of a Faraday that he "looks at life only a Chemist;" of an Owen "that he looks at life only as a ologist." It is understood that any great pursuit must cessarily draw away the thoughts and activities from other rsuits. Why then is Art to be excluded from the same ious privilege? Why is the Artist, who is in earnest, cluded from the toleration spontaneously awarded to the ilosopher? I know but of one reason, and that is the lisposition in men to accept Art as serious. Because it

ministers directly to our pleasures, Art is looked on as
child of luxury, the product of idleness; and those who can
rise to the height of the conception which animated a Goe
and a Schiller, are apt to treat it as mere rhetoric and s
importance in men who speak of Art as the noblest form
Culture. Indeed those who regard Painting and Sculpture
means of supplying their dining-rooms and galleries with cos
ornaments; Music, as furnishing the excuse for a box at t
opera; and Poetry as an agreeable pastime, may be justifi
in thinking lightly of painters, sculptors, musicians, and poe
But I will not suppose the reader to be one of this class; a
may therefore appeal to his truer appreciation for a verdict
favour of the claims made by Art to serious recognition, as o
among the many forms of national culture. This granted,
follows that the more earnestly the artist accepts and follo
his career, the more honour does he claim from us.

Now Goethe was a man of too profoundly serious a natu
not to be in earnest with whatever he undertook; he led
earnest and laborious life, when he might have led one
pleasure and luxurious idleness. "To scorn delights and li
laborious days," with no other reward than the reward
activity, the delight of development, was one of the necessiti
of his nature. He worked at Science with the patient labo
of one who had to earn his bread; and he worked in the fa
of dire discouragement, with no reward in the shape of pen
or praise. In Art, which was the main region of his int
lectual strivings, he naturally strove after completeness.
the Philosopher is observed drawing materials for his genera
sations out of even the frivolities of the passing hour, learni
in the theatre, the ball-room, or in the incoherent talk
railway passengers, to detect illustrations of the laws he
silently elaborating, we do not accuse him of looking on
only as a Philosopher, thereby implying that he is deficient
the feelings of his race; yet something like this is done
those who make a crime of Goethe's constant endeavour
collect from life material for Art.

If when it is said "he looked on life only as an artist," t
meaning is that he, as an artist, necessarily made Art
principal occupation of his life—the phrase is a truism; a
if the meaning is that he isolated himself from the labo
and pursuits of his fellow-men, to play with life, and arran
it as an agreeable drama—the phrase is a calumny. It
only through deep sympathy that a man can become

at artist; those who play with life can only play with art. e great are serious. That Goethe was a great artist all mit. Has the life we have narrated shown him to be ficient in benevolence, in lovingness, in sympathy with ners and their pursuits? has it shown any evidence of a ture so wrapped in self-indulgence, and so coldly calculat-, that life *could* become a mere playing to it? If the swer be No, then let us hear no more about Goethe's oking on life only as an artist. The vulgar may blame devotion which they cannot understand; do not let us itate the vulgar. "Le monde comprend peu un pareil ïcisme," says a thoughtful and sympathetic writer, "et it souvent une sorte de sécheresse dans l'âpreté de ces ındes âmes,—dures pour elles-mêmes et par conséquent peu pour les autres, qui ont l'air de se consoler de tout, urvu que l'univers reste livré à leur contemplation. Mais fond c'est là le plus haut degré du désintéressement et le ıs beau triomphe de l'âme humaine. Ce que la conscience ıorée des âmes tendres et vertueuses appelle l'égoisme du nie, n'est d'ordinaire que le détachement des jouissances rsonnelles et l'oubli de soi pour l'idéal."[1]

While one party has assailed him for his political indifference, another, and still more ungenerous party, has assailed n for what they call his want of religion. The man who ı read Goethe's works and not perceive in them a spirit eply religious, must limit the word religion to the designan of his own doctrines; and the man who, reading them, covers that Goethe was not orthodox, is discovering the ı at mid-day. Orthodox he never pretended to be. His igious experiences had begun early, and his doubts began h them. There are those who regard Doubt as criminal itself; but no human soul that has once struggled, that once been perplexed with baffling thoughts which it has en too sincere to huddle away and stifle in precipitate consions dreading to face the consequences of doubt, will ak thus harshly and unworthily of it.

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds:
> He fought his doubts and gathered strength;
> He would not make his judgment blind;
> He faced the spectres of the mind,
> And laid them: thus he came at length
> To find a stronger faith his own.[2]

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[1] Ernest Renan: *Essais de Morale*, p. 138. [2] *In Memoriam.*

The course of his opinions, as we have seen, was often alter
At times he approached the strictness of strict sects; at tim
he went great lengths in scepticism. The Fräulein v
Klettenberg taught him to sympathise with the Moravian
but Lavater's unconscious hypocrisy, and the moral degra
tion of the Italian priesthood, gradually changed his resp
for the Christian Churches into open and sometimes sarcas
contempt of priests and priesthoods. In various epochs
his long life he expressed himself so variously that a piet
may claim him, or a Voltairian may claim him: both w
equal show of justice. The secret of this contradiction l
in the fact that he had deep religious sentiments, w
complete scepticism on most religious doctrines. Th
whenever the Encyclopedists attacked Christianity he w
ready to defend it;[1] but when he was brought in conta
with dogmatic Christians, who wanted to force their cre
upon him, he resented the attempt, and answered in t
spirit of his scepticism. To the Encyclopedists he wou
say, "Whatever frees the intellect, without at the same ti
giving us command over ourselves, is pernicious;" or
would utter one of his profound and pregnant aphorism
such as

Nur das Gesetz kann uns die Freiheit geben,

i.e. only within the circle of Law can there be true Freedo
We are not free when we acknowledge no higher power, b
when we acknowledge it, and in reverence raise ourselves
proving that a Higher lives in us.

But against dogmatic teachings he opposed the fundamen
rule, that all conceptions of the Deity must necessarily be
individual conceptions, valid for us, but not to the same ext
for others. Each soul has its own religion; must have it
an individual possession; let each see that he be true to
which is far more efficacious than trying to accommod
himself to another's!

Im Innern ist ein Universum auch;
Daher der Völker löblicher Gebrauch
Dass Jeglicher das Beste was er kennt
Er Gott, ja seinen Gott benennt.

[1] ABEKEN was told by a lady that she once heard Goethe soundly ra
respected friend, because she spoke of sacred persons in the tone of vul
rationalism.

believe in God" was, he said, "a beautiful and praiseworthy rase; but to *recognise* God in all his manifestations, *that* is ie holiness on earth." He declared himself in the deepest nse of the word a Protestant, and as such claimed "the right holding his inner being free from all prescribed dogma, the ht of developing himself religiously"! With reference to e genuineness of Scripture, he maintained with the modern piritualists that nothing is genuine but what is truly excellent, nich stands in harmony with the purest nature and reason, d which even now ministers to our highest development. e looked upon the Four Gospels as genuine, "for there is them a reflection of a greatness which emanated from the rson of Jesus, and which was of as divine a kind as was er seen upon earth. If I am asked whether it is in my ture to pay Him devout reverence, I say—certainly! I w before Him as the divine manifestation of the highest orality. If I am asked whether it is in my nature to rever- ce the sun, I again say—certainly! For he is likewise a anifestation of the highest Being. I adore in him the light d the productive power of God; by which we all live, move, d have our being. But if I am asked whether I am inclined bow before a thumb bone of the apostle Peter or Paul, I y—away with your absurdities! . . . Let mental culture go advancing, let science go on gaining in depth and breadth, d the human intellect expand as it may, it will never go yond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it ines forth in the Gospels. The mischievous sectarianism of otestants will one day cease, and with it the hatred between ther and son, sister and brother; for as soon as the pure ctrine and love of Christ are comprehended in their true ture, and have become a living principle, we shall feel our- lves great and free as human beings, and not attach special portance to a degree more or less in the outward forms of ligion. Besides, we shall all gradually advance from a ristianity of words and faith to a Christianity of feeling d action." He was eighty-two when those words were tered to Eckermann. Ten years before, he wrote to his d friend the Countess von Stolberg: "I have meant nestly all my life both with myself and others, and in all y earthly strivings have ever looked upwards to the Highest. ou and yours have done so likewise. Let us continue to rk thus while there is daylight for us; for others another n will shine by which they will work, while for us a brighter

Light will shine. And so let us remain untroubled about t future! In our Father's kingdom there are many provinc and as He has given us here so happy a resting place, so w He certainly care for us above; perhaps we shall be bless with what here on earth has been denied us, to know o another merely by seeing one another, and thence m thoroughly to love one another."

There are two aspects under which religion may be co sidered: the divine aspect, and the human aspect; in t one it is Theosophy, in the other Ethics. Goethe's Theosop was that of Spinoza, modified by his own poetical tendencie it was not a geometrical, but a poetical Pantheism. In it t whole universe was conceived as divine; not as a lifeless ma but as the living manifestation of Divine Energy ever flowi forth into activity. St. Paul tells us that God lives in eve thing, and everything in God. Science tells us that the wo is always *becoming*. Creation continues. The world was n made, once and for ever, as a thing completed, and afterwar serenely contemplated. The world is still amaking. T primal energies of Life are as young and potent as of o issuing forth under new forms through metamorphoses high and ever higher, as dawn broadens into day.

Goethe's religion was eminently concrete, and devout in worship of realities. He believed in fact; he thought real in itself holier than any fiction could make it. Human natu was to him a holy fact, and man's body a temple of holine This is Hellenic, but its kinship with Spinoza's system is al obvious. Spinoza had no sympathy with those philosophe who deride or vilify human nature: in his opinion it was bet to try to understand it; and disregarding the clamours of th who conceived the emotions and actions of human nature be chaotic and absurd, he analysed its properties as if had been a mathematical figure. In other words, he inquir without passion, reasoned without foregone conclusions, i terrogated the facts as they presented themselves, and record the simple answers.[1] And this did Goethe. He strove abo all things to understand fact, because fact was divine manif tation. The mystic change of birth and death—the sw

[1] *Ethices*, Pars iii., præfatio: "Nam ad illos revertere volo, qui homin affectus et actiones detestari vel ridere malunt, quam intelligere. His s dubio mirum videbitur, quod hominum vitia et ineptias more geometr tractare aggrediar, et certa ratione demonstrare velim ea quæ rati repugnare, quæque vana, absurda, et horrenda esse clamitant. Sed n hæc ratio est."

uences of opening life and orderly development—the rest-
s strivings and the placid rests—the ever-moving shuttles of
"roaring Loom of Time, which weaves for God the garment
see him by"—were to him the "freshly uttered word of
d."

Goethe's moral system was intimately connected with this
eosophy. His worship was Nature worship, his moral
tem an idealisation of Humanity. The human being was
highest manifestation of the Divine on earth, and the
hest manifestation of Humanity was therefore the ideal
which morality tended. We must first learn Renuncia-
n; we must learn to limit ourselves to the Possible; in
s first restraint lies the germ of self-sacrifice: in giving up
ims too high for attainment, we learn to give up claims for
sake of others. True piety springs from human love.
f certain phenomena of nature," he says, "looked at from
moral standing point, force us to assume the existence of
rimitive Evil, so on the other hand many phenomena force
to assume a primitive Good. This spring of goodness,
en flowing into life, we name *Piety;* as the ancients did,
o regarded it as the basis of all virtue. It is the force
ich counterbalances egoism; and if by a miracle it could
a moment suddenly be active in all men, the earth would
once be free from evil."

It would be no difficult task to select from his works a
ies of moral propositions of the noblest character; but
leed his works are saturated with a morality such as speaks
every heart not prejudiced, and are even more remarkable
the absence of any mean, grovelling, selfish, and narrow
ws than for their direct teaching. The cry of "Immorality"
ich has been sometimes raised against his works, springs
m that uncharitableness which denounces every thought
taught by the denouncing sect. If any one can read
ethe's works and not feel the writer to have been one
engthened by noble sentiments and warmed by the purest
e for human nature in its most generous forms, I have
hing to add to the words of the spirit in *Faust*,

Du gleichst dem Geist den du begreifst,—

ou resemble the Spirit which you understand."[1]

[1] I heard a capital story of Carlyle at a dinner party in Berlin, silencing the
about Goethe's want of religion, by one of his characteristic sarcasms.
some time he sat quiet, but not patient, while certain pietists were throw-

Whatever else he has been accused of, he has never bee accused of not having striven incessantly to reach a full develo ment of his own being, and to aid the culture of his natio There is something truly grand in the picture of his later year so calm, and yet so active. His sympathy, instead of growi cold with age, seems every year to become more active. Eve discovery in Science, every new appearance in Literature, eve promise in Art finds him eager as a child to be instructed, a ready with aid or applause to further it.

Old age indeed is a relative term. Goethe at seventy w younger than many men at fifty; and at eighty-two he wro a scientific review of the great discussion between Cuvier a Geoffroy St. Hilaire on Philosophic Zoology, a review whic few men in their prime could write. But there are Physi logists who deny that seventy is old age. M. Flourens, f example, maintains that from fifty-five to seventy, man is his most virile period; and M. Reveillé Parisse, in his wo *La Vieillesse*, declares that between fifty-five and seventy-fiv and sometimes beyond, the mind acquires an extension, consistence, and a solidity truly remarkable,—"c'est véritabl ment l'homme ayant atteint toute la hauteur de ses facultés And the history of Science and Literature furnishes seve striking examples of intellectual activity in old age—t activity being doubtless a cause of this prolongation of powe Sophocles, who is said to have written his masterpiece eighty, is an example of great poetic capacity thus prolonge The reflective powers often retain their capacity, and increase of material seem to *increase* it; but not so the pr ductive powers. Yet in Goethe we see extraordinary fertilit even in the latest years; the Second Part of *Faust* was co pleted in his eighty-first year, and the *Westöstliche Divan* w written in his sixty-fifth. Although we cannot by any mea consider these works as equal to the works of his earlier da we must still consider them as marvellous productions to iss under the sunset of a poet.

ing up their eyes, and regretting that so great a genius! so godlike a geniu should not have more purely devoted himself to the service of Christi Truth! and should have had so little, &c., &c. Carlyle sat grim, ominou silent, his hands impatiently twisting his napkin, until at last he bro silence, and in his slow emphatic way said, "*Meine Herren*, did you ne hear the story of that man who vilified the sun because it would not light cigar?" This bombshell completely silenced the enemy's fire. Not a wo was spoken in reply. "I could have kissed him!" exclaimed the enthusias artist who narrated the anecdote to me.

The *Westöstliche Divan* was a refuge from the troubles of the me. Instead of making himself unhappy with the politics of urope, he made himself happy studying the history and poetry f the East. He even began to study the Oriental languages, id was delighted to be able to copy the Arabic manuscripts their peculiar characters. Von Hammer, De Sacy, and her Orientalists had given him abundant material; his poetic tivity soon gave that material shape. But while donning e Turban, and throwing the Caftan over his shoulders, he mained a true German. He smoked opium, and drank *oukah;* but his dreams were German and his songs were erman. This forms the peculiarity of the Divan—it is Vest-Eastern; the images are Eastern; the feeling is Western. recisely as in the Roman Elegies he had thrown himself into ie classical past, reproducing its forms with unsurpassed ease id witchery, yet never for a moment ceasing to be original, ever ceasing to be German; so also in this Eastern world we cognise the Western poet. He follows the Caravan slowly cross the desert; he hears the melancholy chant of the ulbul singing on the borders of sparkling fountains; he stens devoutly to the precepts of Mohammed, and rejoices the strains of Hafis. The combination is most felicitous. produced an epoch in German Literature. The Lyrists, ccording to Gervinus, suddenly following this example, at nce relinquished their warlike and contemporary tone to ng the songs of the East. Rückert and Platen, following ie trace of the German Hafis, wandered among roses and hazels; other poets gladly imitated them. Does it not seem s if there were a natural tendency in the German character to rn the back upon active political life, when we see that in ie two great crises of history, in the Crusades and in the War Independence, the poets fled from the stormy contempla- on of their time, seeking inspiration in an order of ideas mpletely opposed to the time? The Minnesingers, amid ie clang of knightly achievements, could only sing of Love id Pleasure; the modern poets, amid the storms of an uropean struggle, could find no inspiration but in Roman- cism, or in Orientalism! This is the more noticeable because oethe has been angrily reproached for his flight into the ast; although surely the aged poet might find an excuse nen the young poets were applauded?

The *Westöstliche Divan* is divided into twelve Books: the nger, Hafis, Love, Contemplation, Sadness, Proverbs,

Timour, Suleika, Wine-house, Parables, Persians, and Par
dise; very various in contents, and of various excellen
Truly may be applied to Goethe the epigraph he applies
Hafis: "Let us call the Word the Bride, and the Spirit w
be the Bridegroom; he who has known Hafis has seen th
marriage:"

Sey das Wort die Braut genannt
Bräutigam der Geist;
Diese Hochzeit hat gekannt
Wer Hafisen preis't.

How much of his own experience he has clothed in the
Eastern forms we cannot know; but in one case, in the *Bu
Suleika*, he has placed the name of Hatem where the rhyn
plainly tells us to read Goethe:

Du beschämst, wie Morgenröthe
Jener Gipfel ernste Wand,
Und noch einmal fühlet *Hatem*
Frühlingshauch und Sommerbrand.

The grace with which many of these poems are lightly touche
the admirable wisdom which smiles so serenely under ther
the calm, hot, noonday stillness, interchanging with the ca
less gaiety of the Wine-house mirth, cannot be indicated
translation; nor will I attempt it. For the sake of the Germ
reader, however, here is one brief specimen:

Trunken müssen wir alle seyn!
Jugend ist Trunkenheit ohne Wein;
Trinkt sich das Alter wieder zu Jugend
So ist es wundervolle Tugend.
Für Sorgen sorgt das liebe Leben
Und Sorgenbrecher sind die Reben.

To these poems is added a volume of Historical Notes, whi
show indeed a conscientious study of the East, but which al
show how immeasurably inferior he was in prose to poet
Age is visible in every page.

In the early chapters of his *Autobiography* he had present
a picture of Frankfurt, which was very gratifying to the peo
of that city; and when, in the year 1814, he passed throu
the city he was received with an ovation which recalls the l
visit of Voltaire to Paris. *Tasso* was performed at the thea
with great pomp. No sooner did he make his appearance
the box which had been prepared for him, and which was hu
with flowers and laurel-crowns, than Haydn's symphony stru

, and the whole house rose with a burst of enthusiastic eering. The symphony continued, and the shouts rose multuously above it. At length the curtain rolled up, and dually a solemn stillness settled through the house. A logue greeted the great poet, and was the signal for more outing. After *Tasso* came an epilogue, during which the rel-crowns were taken from the busts of Ariosto and Tasso, d handed to Goethe. And when all was over, the corridors d staircases of the theatre were crowded with admirers, ough whom he passed smiling his thanks.

CHAPTER VI

THE ACTIVITY OF AGE

the year 1816 he began to publish an Art Journel, *Kunst d Alterthum*, which continued till 1828, a curious monument the old man's studies and activity. It is curious, moreover, indicating a change in the direction of his ideas. We have n what his relation was to the Romantic School, and how e tendencies of his nature and education led him to oppose the characteristics of that school the characteristics of Greek t. The *Propyleen* represents the Greek tendency: *Kunst d Alterthum* represents a certain leaning towards the Ro- ntic. Gothic Art, the old German and Netherland painters, longer seemed to him objectionable; but the discovery of e Elgin Marbles once more awakened his enthusiasm for t perfection of form which was the ideal of Greek Art;[1] d I have heard Rauch, the sculptor, humorously narrate ethe's whimsical outbreaks when the young sculptor Rietschl med in danger of perverting his talent by executing designs the spirit of the Romantic School.

Strong, however, as the opposition was which he felt to the garies of the so-called Christian Art, he had too much of the *ust* spirit to keep entirely aloof from the Romanticists. In old age the tendency to substitute Reflection for Inspira- n naturally assumed greater force; and his love of mys- cation was now wearing a serious aspect, duping himself haps as much as it duped others. The German nation had

[1] See his letter to Haydon in the *Life of Haydon*, vol. ii. p. 205.

persisted in discovering profound meanings in passages wh
he had written without any recondite meaning at all; finc
himself a prophet when he meant only to be a poet, he
dually fell into the snare, and tried to be a prophet now
could no longer be so great a poet as before. Every incid
was to be typical. Every phrase was of importance. Whet
the lion should roar at a particular time (in the *Novelle*)
whether he should be silent, were subjects of long deliberati
The *Wanderjahre* was one great arsenal of symbols, the Secc
Part of *Faust* another. He delighted in seeing the philosop
critics outdoing each other in far-fetched ingenuity, "expla
ing" his *Faust* and *Meister*; and very astutely he refused
come to their aid. He saw libraries filled with discussions
to what he had intended; but no one ever seduced him i
an explanation which would have silenced these discussic
Instead of doing so, he seemed disposed to furnish the wo
with more riddles. In a word, he mystified the public;
he did so in a grave, unconscious way, with a certain belie
his own mystification.

In the year 1816, Saxe-Weimar was made a Grand Duc
and he received the Falcon Order, together with an incre
of salary, which now became three thousand thalers, with e
allowance for his equipage. Two other events made this y
memorable. Lotte—Werther's Lotte—now a widow in
sixtieth year, and mother of twelve children, pays him a v
at Weimar. They had not met since her marriage, and w
a meeting this must have been for both! how strange
mingling of feelings recurrent to a pleasantly-agitated past,
of feelings perplexed by the surprise at finding each other
much changed!

The second and far more serious event of the year, is
death of his wife. Many affected to consider this "a ha
release." People are fond of arranging the lives of oth
according to their own conceptions, interpreting afflictions
these without regard to the feelings of the afflicted. The b
was heavy to bear. She who for eight-and-twenty years
loved and aided him, who—whatever her faults—had been
him what no other woman was, could not be taken from
without making him deeply feel the loss. His self-mas
was utterly shaken. He kneeled at her bedside, seizing
cold hands, and exclaiming: "Thou wilt not forsake
No, no; thou must not forsake me!" He has expressed
feelings in two passages only; in the exquisite lines he w

the day of her death, and in a letter to Zelter. These are e lines :—

Du versuchst, O Sonne, vergebens
Durch die düstern Wolken zu scheinen !
Der ganze Gewinn meines Lebens
Ist, ihren Verlust zu beweinen.[1]

nd to Zelter the words were these : "When I tell thee, thou ugh and sorely-tried son of earth, that my dear little wife has t me, thou wilt know what that means."

In Science he strove to find forgetfulness; and the loneli- ss of his house was next year changed into an unaccustomed eliness by the marriage of his son with Ottilie von Pog- sch, one of the gayest and most brilliant of the Weimar cle. She was always a great favourite with her father-in-law, d during the remainder of his life not only kept his house r him, and received his numerous guests, but became a ivileged favourite, to whom everything was permitted. In the ar following he sang a cradle song over his first grandchild.

His ministerial duties were not heavy, but were punctiliously rformed. Here are two anecdotes which exhibit his im- rious and determined character in a strong light. He had ng laboured for the improvement of Jena. The library, he ld Eckermann, "was in very bad condition. The situation as damp and close, and by no means fit to contain its trea- res in a proper manner; particularly as by purchase of the ittner library on the part of the grand-duke, an addition had en made of 13,000 volumes, which lay in heaps upon the or, because there was no room to place them properly. I as really in some distress on that account. An addition ould have been made to the building, but for this the means re wanting; and moreover this addition could easily be oided, since adjoining the library there was a large room anding empty, and quite calculated to supply our necessities. owever, this room was not in possession of the library, but as used by the medical faculty, who sometimes employed it r their conferences. I therefore applied to these gentlemen th the very civil request that they would give up this room r the library. To this they would not agree. They were lling, they said, to give it up if I would have a new room ilt for their conferences, and that immediately. I replied at I should be very ready to have another place prepared for

[1] "In vain, O Sun, you struggle to shine through the dark clouds; the ole gain of my life is to bewail her loss."

them, but that I could not promise them a new building i
mediately. This did not satisfy them, for when next morn
I asked them for the key, I was told it could not be foun
There now remained no other course but to enter as conquer
I therefore sent for a bricklayer, and took him into the libr
before the wall of the adjoining room. 'This wall, my frien
said I, 'must be very thick, for it separates two different pa
of the building: just try how strong it is.' The brickla
went to work, and scarcely had he given five or six hea
blows, when bricks and mortar fell in, and one could
through the opening some venerable perukes with which t
room was decorated. 'Go on, my friend,' said I. 'I can
yet see clearly enough. Do not restrain yourself, but act
if you were in your own house.' This friendly encourageme
so animated the bricklayer, that the opening was soon la
enough to serve perfectly for a door; when my library att
dants rushed into the room each with an armful of boo
which they threw upon the ground as a sign of possessio
Benches, chairs, and desks vanished in a moment; and
assistants were so quick and active, that in a few days all t
books were arranged along the walls. The doctors, who so
after entered the room through the usual door, were quite co
founded at so unexpected a change. They did not know wh
to say, but retired in silence; but they all harboured a sec
grudge against me. When I related this to the grand-du
he laughed heartily and quite approved me. Afterwards, wh
on account of the great dampness of the library I wished
take down and remove the whole of the old city wall, whi
was quite useless, I found no better success. My entreati
reasons, and representations found no hearing; and I w
forced at last to go to work as a conqueror. When the c
authorities saw my workmen destroying their old wall, th
sent a deputation to the grand-duke, with the humble requ
that his highness would be pleased, by a word of command,
check my violent destruction of their venerable wall. But
grand-duke, who had secretly authorised me, said: 'I do
intermeddle with Goethe's affairs. He knows what he has
do, and must act as he thinks right. Go to him and speak
him yourself if you have the courage!'"

The other anecdote is recorded by Luden. In 1823
Landtag (or Parliament, to use the nearest English equivale
assembled, and demanded the finance accounts. Goethe, w
was at the head of the Commission for Art and Science,

hich a sum of 11,787 thalers was allotted, at first took no otice of the demand made for his accounts; but was heard to xpress himself angrily at this Landtag with its pedantic fuss out a paltry sum. At length he was prevailed upon to send his accounts. What was the surprise of the Landtag to ad a few lines to this effect: "Received, so much; Exended, so much; Remains, so much. *Signed* Grossherzogl. mmediatcommission für Wissenschaft und Kunst, *Goethe*" / t this cavalier procedure some of the members burst out ughing; others were indignant, and proposed to refuse the ant for the following year; a proposition which was all the ore acceptable because the Landtag had a great idea of conomy, and but a small idea of the value of science and art. uden strove to convince them this was an unwise procedure. e urged indeed the necessity of the Landtag being put in ossession of all the details of expenditure, not that any doubt ould arise respecting the judicious mode in which the expenture had been made, but because in public affairs it was dispensable men should see as well as believe. Against him was argued that the mere statement of every groschen reived and expended was not sufficient; it was also necessary at the Landtag should be convinced that the expenditure ad been solely for useful and desirable purposes, not peritting any favouritism or luxury to enjoy the benefit of public oney.

Although the sittings of the Landtag were strictly private, ne cannot be surprised at these debates having oozed out and rmed the topic of gossip. Goethe was very indignant. He ad been so long accustomed to an imperial sway, before hich every one gave way, that the idea of his actions being ntrolled and questioned by a Landtag was very irritating to m. Nor, although he was obviously in the wrong in this stance, were the grand-duke and duchess inclined to side gainst him. Karl August himself spoke earnestly to the land arshal, urging on him the impropriety of so offending oethe; the grand-duchess sent for Luden, who thus reports e interview: "She spoke to me with that dignified simplicity hich made her so imposing, and which was imposing even to apoleon in his anger. It would be a serious evil, she said, our friendly relations should be disturbed by any misunderanding. It would be the more unpleasant to me, because I ar it would much annoy the grand-duke. The Landtag is nquestionably in the right; but the Geheimrath Goethe un-

doubtedly thinks he too is in the right. Above or beyo the written laws there is still another law—*the law for po and women.* The Landtag is assuredly convinced that t whole of the money granted has been truly employed Goethe? You admit that? Well, then, the only questi that now can arise is whether the money has been prope expended. But here one must remember the position held the Geheimrath in relation to the world, to this country, to o court, and to the grand-duke through a long series of year this position very naturally has influenced his mode of looki at affairs. I find it perfectly intelligible that he can well b lieve he has before all others the right of deciding for hims what is the best means of employing the money placed at h disposal. I do not understand these matters, and far be from me to pretend to set any one right; my only wish is th friendly relations be preserved, and that the old Geheimra may be spared every annoyance. How this is to be done do not see. But the Landtag need be under no uneasine lest this should become a precedent. *We have but one Goet and who knows how long we may preserve him;* a second w not perhaps be soon found again."

Is this not very charming? And can we wonder that Lud was conquered, and that in turn the whole Landtag was broug over to a sort of sullen acquiescence? While relating su characteristic anecdotes, place must be found for another, whi is indeed less interesting in itself, but which circulates Germany and England under a very absurd and very injurio form. The first time I heard it gravely stated as a fact, which proof could be brought, the reader may imagine wi what indignation I at once denied it, and insisted on the pro being produced, although proof must have been indeed ov whelming which could make me believe that Goethe had *sto an ingot of gold.* No proof, however, came. The accusati slipped from my mind, until it was once more gravely adduce and that too in Weimar. The requisite inquiries having be made, this story emerged as the foundation of the scandal.

The Emperor of Russia had forwarded to Döbereiner, t great chemist, a bar of platinum. It was given to Goet who was to examine it, and make any experiment on it pleased, and then transmit it to Döbereiner. Goethe, wh passion for minerals is well known, and who had the "collecto mania," placed this bar of platinum among his treasures, a delighted himself with contemplating it, till at last he co

ot be brought to part with it. Döbereiner, impatient, wrote him, begging to have it sent. But no answer came. He rote again, without success. He was, indeed, placed in a osition very similar to that in which we saw Professor Büttner, ho having lent Goethe his prisms and optical instruments, rote in vain to have them returned, and was forced to send s servant with an order to bring them away. Goethe delayed id delayed, and could not bring himself to part with the atinum; and when Döbereiner, out of patience, complained the grand-duke, Karl August laughed and said, "Leave e old donkey in peace! you'll never get it from him. I will rite to the emperor for another."

To this may be added, that in the early *genialische* period oethe carried off a hundred engravings by Albrecht Dürer om Knebel's collection, to study them at leisure at home, id these engravings Knebel never saw in his own house again. ow these cases, although coming under the category of that uch abused license which men permit themselves, namely, e license of borrowing books, umbrellas, and money, are ot defensible, nor will I palliate them. Let the reader pass ny sentence he will upon such infractions of the rule of conientiousness; but let us not hear such things uttered as that oethe stole a bar of gold or platinum.

With Döbereiner, he followed all the new phenomena which hemistry was then bringing before the astonished world. He so prepared his own writings on morphology for the press; id studied Greek mythology, English literature, and Gothic t. Byron's *Manfred* he reviewed in the *Kunst und Alterthum*, id enthusiastically welcomed our great poet as the greatest roduct of modern times. Scott also he read with ever-creasing admiration. Homer, always studied with delight, ow reassumed to him that individuality which Wolff had r a time destroyed; Schubarth's *Ideen über Homer* having rought him round once more to the belief in the existence "the blind old man of Scio's rocky isle."[1] Painting, ulpture, architecture, geology, meteorology, anatomy, optics, riental literature, English literature, Calderon, and the mantic school in France—these were the subjects which by rns occupied his inexhaustible activity. "Life," he says, resembles the Sybilline Books; its becomes dearer the less ere remains of it." To one who could so worthily occupy

[1] See the little poem *Homer wider Homer*.

the last remaining years of a long life, they must indeed hav been precious. As he grew older, he worked harder. H went less into society. To court he very seldom went. "' wouldn't send the picture," writes the duke to him, "becaus I hoped it might lure thee out, now Candlemas is over, a da when every bear and badger leaves his lair." But in lieu o his going to court, the court went to him. Once every wee the grand-duchess paid him a visit, sometimes bringing wit her a princely visitor, such as the late Emperor of Russia, the grand-duke, or the King of Würtemberg. He had alway something new and interesting set aside for this visit, whic was doubly dear to him, because he had a tender regard fo the grand-duchess, and it pleased him to be able to show he a new engraving, medallion, book, poem, or some scientifi novelty. Karl August came often, but not on particular days He used to walk up into the simple study, and chat there a with a brother. One day Goethe had a Jena student payin him a visit; the student saw an elderly gentleman walk un announced into the room, and quietly seat himself on a chair the student continued his harangue, and when it was concluded Goethe quietly said, "But I must introduce the gentlemen his Royal Highness the Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Her ——, student from Jena." Never did the student forget th embarrassment of that moment!

The first edition of *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre* falls i this period, 1821, and as this edition is the one best known i England through Carlyle's translation, it may now be criticised the more so, as what was afterwards *thrown into* the book (will not say worked into it) only made it still more fragmentar and imperfect.

There are pages in the *Wanderjahre* which he alone coul have written; but I cannot bring myself to regard the whol book as anything better than a collection of sketches and studie often incomplete, and sometimes not worth completing. It very unequal, some parts being as feeble as others are admi able. The story of *The Man of Fifty* has capital points, an the *New Melusina* is a charming fairy tale; but much of wh is symbolical seems to me only fantastic; and as a compositio the work is feeble, and careless even to impertinence. N only are the various little stories "dragged in" with the tran parent artifice of juvenile productions; not only are the stories for the most part tiresome and sometimes trivial, b there is one story (*Nicht zu weit*) which, beginning with co

derable animation, is actually left unfinished in the work, ust as it lay unfinished in his portfolio. Observe it is not iven as a fragment—the conclusion is promised, but never omes. This is an impertinence to the public; all the more emarkable as coming from a writer who thought so much of rt. He might have published the stories separately, as they ere written separately; and if he could not work out the reat scheme of the *Wanderjahre*, he might have left it a agment, or left it unpublished.

It is easy for admirers of this work to cite very beautiful assages; and it is by no means difficult to read under its ymbolical dulness any profound meanings the interpreter ishes to read there. But for my own part, greatly as I dmire Goethe, and profoundly as his works affect me, I do ot recognise in the *Wanderjahre* the old magic, nor can my ove for the writer persuade me that it is well written, well onceived, or intelligibly executed. I quarrel with no man ho finds delight in the book; but candour compels me to wn that I find in it almost every fault a work can have: it is nintelligible, it is tiresome, it is fragmentary, it is dull, and it often ill-written. When particular passages are cited for heir wisdom or their beauty, one is apt to fancy that one has een unjust to a strange work; but a *re*-reading of the work s a whole soon restores the original verdict. Irving said that here was more true religion in the episode of the Three everences than in all the theological writings of the day. nd Carlyle has on more than one occasion noticed the rofound wisdom which shines through many of the pages. ow can it be otherwise, when Goethe is the author? But eparate passages do not make a book; and to show how this ook was made, a passage from Eckermann will suffice. When he began to remodel and finish this novel, which had reviously appeared in one volume,[1] Goethe intended to xpand it into two. But as the work progressed the manuript grew beyond expectation; and as his secretary wrote idely, Goethe was deceived, and thought he had enough for hree volumes, and accordingly the manuscript went in three olumes to the publishers. However, when the printing had eached a certain point, it was found that a miscalculation had een made, and that the two last volumes were too small. he publishers sent for more manuscript, and as the course of

[1] This is the volume Carlyle translated. See *German Romance*, vol. iv. is superior to the expanded work.

the novel could not be altered, and it was impossible to wri
a new tale in the hurry of the moment, Goethe was really
some perplexity. Under these circumstances he sent for m
told me the state of the case, and mentioned how he thoug
of helping himself out of the difficulty, laying before me tw
large bundles of manuscripts. 'In these two parcels,' said h
'you will find various papers hitherto unpublished, detache
pieces finished and unfinished; opinions on natural scienc
art, literature, and life, all mingled together. Suppose yo
were to make up from these six or eight printed sheets to f
the gaps in my *Wanderjahre*. Strictly speaking, they hav
nothing to do with it, but the proceeding may be justifie
by the fact that mention is made of an archive in Makaria
house in which such detached pieces are preserved. Thus w
shall not only get over a difficulty, but find a fitting vehicle fo
sending a number of interesting things into the world.'
approved of the plan, set to work at once, and completed th
desired arrangement in a short time. Goethe seemed we
satisfied. I had put together the whole into two princip
parts; one under the title 'From Makaria's Archive,' the oth
under the title 'According to the Views of the Wanderer
And as Goethe, at this time, had just finished two poems—
one on 'Schiller's Skull,' and the other *Kein Wesen kann z
Nichts zerfallen*—he was desirous to bring out these also, an
we added them at the close of the two divisions. But whe
the *Wanderjahre* came out, no one knew what to make of i
The progress of the romance was interrupted by a number
enigmatical sayings, the explanation of which could be expecte
from men only of special studies, such as artists, literati, me
of science; this greatly annoyed all other readers, especial
those of the fair sex. Then, as for the two poems, peop
could as little understand them as they could guess how th
got into such a place. Goethe laughed at this."

No other criticism of the *Wanderjahre* is needed after suc
a story. Had Goethe stood in awe of the public, had he liv
in England or France, where "Reviewers" exercise at lea
the duty of Police, he would not thus have ventured to pl
with his own reputation and to mystify the public.

Nor did he escape without punishment even in German
He had mystified the public, but the public was not please
His friends were not pleased. No one accepted the wo
with satisfaction. It remained for writers of our day to see
it a social Bible—a Sybilline Book. The first symptoms

ssatisfaction came from his nearest friends; but their jections were of course mild, and were praise compared th the objections raised by his enemies. A certain Pust-chen, a clergyman of Lieme, imitated Nicolai's parody of *Verther*, but in a serious spirit, bringing out a *Wanderjahre*, which Goethe's views of life were held up to the execration all good Christians. It had become the watchword of one rty to say Goethe was no Christian; as it afterwards became e watchword of another party to say he was no patriot; and, ally, there came Menzel, who said he was not only no ristian, no Patriot, no Moralist, but also no Genius,—only nan of talent! Goethe contented himself with an epigram so on Pustkuchen, and continued his way. To his ponents generally he said, "If they could judge me, I ould not be the man I am."

Hätten sie mich beurtheilen können
So wär' ich nicht was ich bin.

nd the barking of the curs, he said, which follows us as we ve the stable, proves nothing more than that we are on rseback:

Es bellt der Spitz aus unserm Stall
Und will uns stets begleiten.
Und seiner lauten Stimme Schall
Beweist nur dass wir reiten.

While a strong feeling of opposition was growing up in his n nation, a feeling which such works as the *Wanderjahre* re not likely to mitigate, his fame began to extend to Italy, gland, and France. His active interest in the important oductions of foreign literature, was reciprocated in the miration expressed for him by men like Manzoni, Scott, ron, Carlyle, Stapfer, Ampère, Soret, and others. He had itten of Manzoni's *Carmagnola*, defending it against adverse ticism, with a fervour which, according to Manzoni, secured reputation in Europe. "It is certain that I owe to Goethe's miration all the praise I have received. I was very ill treated til he so nobly defended me, and since then I have not only n public opinion change, but I myself have learned to look my productions in a new light." How profound was his miration for Byron, and how flattered Byron was by it, is ll known. The poem he sent to Byron, in answer to the dication of *Werner*, reached him just as he was setting out the expedition to Greece.

Nor was his activity confined to reading. Oersted's magn ficent discovery of electro-magnetism awakened his keene interest. He made Döbereiner exhibit the phenomena, an shortly afterwards had Oersted to visit him. D'Alton's an tomical work on the Sloth and Megatherium found him ready as a young reviewer to proclaim its importance to th world. He wrote also the account of his *Campaign in France* the *Annals* of his Life; Essays on Art; smaller poems; th epigrams, *Zahme Xenien;* translated modern Greek songs; an sketched a restoration of the lost drama *Phaëton*, by Euripide

It is evident then that there was abundant life in the ol Jupiter, whose frame was still massive and erect; whose bro had scarcely a wrinkle of old age; whose head was still free from baldness as ever; and whose large brown eyes ha still that flashing splendour which distinguished them. Hufe land, the physician, who had made a special study of th human organisation with reference to its powers of vitalit says, that never did he meet with a man in whom bodily an mental organisation were so perfect as in Goethe. Not onl was the prodigious strength of vitality remarkable in him, bu equally so the perfect *balance* of functions. "One can tru say that his distinguishing characteristic was the harmony wit which all mental faculties worked together, so that his creativ Imagination was always under the control of his Reason; an the same is true of his physical faculties: no function wa predominant, all worked together for the continuance of marvellous balance. But *productivity* was the fundament character of his bodily and mental organisation; and th former showed itself in a rich nutritive power, a rapid sa guinification and reproduction. He made much blood eve as an old man."

Not only life, but the life of life, the power of loving wa still preserved to him. *Quisquis amat, nulla est conditio senex*, says old Pontanus; and the Marquis de Lassay pretti makes the loss of love-dreams a sign of the last sleep:- "Hélas, quand on commence à ne plus rêver, ou plutôt rêver moins, on est près de s'endormir pour toujours." the seventy-fourth year of his age, Goethe had still you enough to love. At Marienbad he met with a Fräulein vo Lewezow. A passion grew up between them, which, returne on her side with almost equal vehemence, brought back him once more the exaltation of the *Werther* period. was thought he would marry her, and indeed he wished

o so; but the representations of his friends, and perhaps the ar of ridicule, withheld him. He tore himself away; and the arienbad Elegy, which he wrote in the carriage as it whirled m away, remains as a token of the passion and his suffering. Nor does the Fräulein von Lewezow appear to have been e only one captivated by the "old man eloquent." Madame ymanowska, according to Zelter, was "madly in love" with m; and however figurative such a phrase may be, it indicates, oming from so grave a man as Zelter, a warmth of enthusiasm ie does not expect to see excited by a man of seventy-four.

On the 7th of November 1825, Goethe, who had a few eeks before prepared a Jubilee for the fiftieth anniversary Karl August's reign, was in turn honoured by a Jubilee elebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his arrival at Weimar. At dawn of day, when he opened the shutters of his bedroom, e first sound that met his ears was a morning song, sung voices concealed in his garden. His first glance fell on e various tasteful gifts of neat-handed friends. At half-past ght all the carriages in the town were in motion; all persons consideration in court and city were in pilgrimage to the oet's house. A party of musicians, and fourteen female ends, had assembled in his salon, to perform a morning le written by Professor Riemer, and set to music by Eber-ein. At nine, when Goethe was conducted from his study a friend and his own son, the crowd in every room was great that they were obliged to lead him unobserved by side entrance. Scarcely was that honoured head beheld an the music began, and heightened the emotion which amed from all eyes. The nymphs of the Ilm greeted the lden day of their faithful poet, and sang his immortality. ie whole throng of auditors was deeply affected. The tones elted away in solemn silence. With modest dignity, the nerable man turned to his friends and expressed his thanks eloquent pressure of the hands and affectionate words. aron von Fritsch then stepped forward, and delivered the tograph letter of the duke, and the golden medal which d been secretly struck in Berlin; it bore the likeness of arl August and Luise on one side; on the other the laurel-owned head of the poet; the names of Karl August and aise were engraved on the rim.

"Goethe, who expected some memorial worthy of the ver, held both for some time unopened in silent emotion. ie various deputations now advanced. There were depu-

tations from Jena, Weimar, Eisenach, and from the Lodge
Freemasons. The Jena students addressed him through t
deputies.

"Shortly after ten, Karl August and Luise came to o
their congratulations. They remained with him an h
alone; when the Hereditary Grand-Duke and Grand-Duch
with their two princesses, arrived. Meanwhile the minist
of state, the chief of the courts of justice, the most dist
guished persons of the court, and the deputations had collect
together; the principal ladies of Weimar, among whom we
the daughters and granddaughters of Wieland and Herd
assembled in an upper room. As soon as all the invited h
arrived, they were conducted, two by two, into the great roo
in which were placed the statue of the grand-duke a
Rauch's bust of Goethe, on a handsome pedestal, with
laurel crown beside it. Just as the procession reached t
centre of the hall, music was heard from the galleries. T
effect of this harmony in the lofty and beautiful hall, decorat
with the busts and portraits, was indescribable.

"At two o'clock a banquet was prepared for more than t
hundred persons in the hall of the Stadthaus. In the eveni
Iphigenia was performed at the theatre. At the end of t
third act, Goethe, warned by his physician, retired; and n
a beautiful conclusion to this extraordinary day awaited hi
A serenade was performed in front of his house by t
orchestral band of the Grand Ducal Chapel. Hummel h
with great feeling and taste combined the triumphal Ma
in Titus, Gluck's overture to *Iphigenia*, and a masterly Ada
of his own, with an echo for horns. The opening express
the triumphant glories of the day, while the melting tones
the Adagio seemed to invite to the tranquillity which follo
the accomplishment of work.

"All the houses in the *Frauenplan*, where Goethe liv
were illuminated. A numerous company repaired to
house, where an elegant entertainment awaited them, a
Goethe remained one hour with his guests before retir
for the night. This day was likewise celebrated at Leip
and Frankfurt. In Frankfurt the Consul-General Bethma
marked the day by placing in his museum a statue of Goet
as large as life, which Rauch had executed for him."[1]

[1] These details and many others are given in *Goethe's Goldener Jubel*
Weimar: 1826. I have abridged the abridgment given by Mrs. Austin, *G*
and his Contemporaries, vol. iii.

Reading this, and such anecdotes as the one formerly rrated about the Landtag, how can we wonder if the man, no was treated so like a god, adopted something of the periousness and assumption of the part thus thrust upon m?

In the following year Germany showed her gratitude to him a privilege which in itself is the severest sarcasm on German tionality—the privilege, namely, of a protection of his copy-ht. He announced a complete edition of his works, and e *Bundestag* undertook to secure him from piracy in German ies! Until that time his works had enriched booksellers; t this tardy privilege secured an inheritance for his children.

In the way of honours, he was greatly flattered by the letter ich Walter Scott sent to him, in expression of an old ad-ration; and on the 28th of August 1827, Karl August me into his study accompanied by the King of Bavaria, who ought with him the Order of the Grand Cross as a homage. strict etiquette a subject was not allowed to accept such an der without his own sovereign granting permission, and oethe, ever punctilious, turned to the grand-duke, saying: f my gracious sovereign permits." Upon which the duke lled out: "*Du alter Kerl! mache doch kein dummes Zeug!* me, old fellow, no nonsense."

On the 6th January 1827, the Frau von Stein died, in her hty-fifth year.

And now the good old duke was to be taken from him om he affectionately styled his *Waffenbruder*—his brother arms. On the 14th of June 1828, he was no more. Hum-ldt's letter to Goethe contains so interesting an account of e duke's last hours, that some sentences may here be cited: As if this great brightness, as with the lofty snow-capped ps, were the forerunner of departing light, never have I seen e great humane prince more animated, more intelligent, more ld, more sympathising with the further development of the ople than in the last days when we had him here. I fre-ently said to my friends, anxiously and full of misgivings, at this animation, this mysterious clearness of intellect, mbined with so much bodily weakness, was to me a fearful enomenon. He himself evidently vacillated between hope recovery, and expectation of the great catastrophe. In tsdam I sat many hours with him. He drank and slept ernately, then drank again, then rose to write to his consort, d then slept again. He was cheerful, but much exhausted.

In the intervals he overpowered me with the most difficu questions upon physics, astronomy, meteorology, and geology upon the atmosphere of the moon; upon the coloured doubl stars; upon the influence of the spots in the sun upon th temperature; upon the appearance of organised forms in th primitive world; and upon the internal warmth of the earth He slept at intervals during his discourse and mine, was ofte restless, and then said, kindly excusing his apparent inattention 'You see, Humboldt, it is all over with me!' Suddenly h began to talk desultorily upon religious matters. He regrette the increase of pietism, and the connection of this species c fanaticism with a tendency towards political absolutism, and the suppression of all free mental action. 'Then,' he ex claimed, 'there are false-hearted fellows, who think that b means of pietism they can make themselves agreeable t princes, and obtain places and ribbons. They have smuggle themselves in with a poetical predilection for the middle ages. His anger soon abated, and he said that he had found muc consolation in the Christian religion. 'It is a humane doc trine,' said he, 'but has been distorted from the beginning The first Christians were the free thinkers among the ultras.'

Knowing Goethe's love for the duke, his friends entertaine great fears that the shock of this event would be terrible. H was seated at dinner when the news arrived. It was whispere from one to the other. At length it was gently broken t him. They were breathless with suspense. But his face re mained quite calm—a calmness which betrayed him. "Ah this is very sad," he sighed; "let us change the subject." H might banish the subject from conversation, he could no banish it from his thoughts. It affected him deeply; all th more so, because he did not give expression to his grie "*Nun ist alles vorbei!* Nothing now remains," he sai When Eckermann came in the evening, he found him utter prostrate.[1]

Retiring to the pleasant scenes of Dornburg, the old ma

[1] The calmness with which he received the announcement recalls tho grand scenes in Marston's *Malcontent* and Ford's *Broken Heart*, where t subordination of emotion to the continuance of offices of politeness rises in sublimity. Herodotus has touched the same chord in his narrative of t terrific story of Thyestes (*Clio*, 119). Harpagus on discovering that he h feasted on his own children in the banquet set before him by Thyestes remai quite calm. Shakspeare has expressed the true philosophy of the matter his usual pregnant language:

> "Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
> Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break."

rove in work and in contemplation of nature to call away s thoughts from his painful loss. The next year—1829—he nished the *Wanderjahre* in the form it now assumes, worked the Second Part of *Faust*, and in conjunction with a young renchman, Soret, who was occupied translating the *Metamorioses of Plants*, revised his scientific papers.

In February 1830, the death of the grand-duchess once ore overshadowed the evening of his life. These clouds thering so fast are significant warnings of the Night which rries on for him—"the night in which no man can work!"

Before narrating the last days of his long career, it will be ecessary to say something of the *Second Part of Faust*, which as not indeed finally completed until the 20th July 1831, it which may be noticed here to avoid interruption of the osing scene.

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND PART OF FAUST

the presence of this poem, I feel more embarrassment than ith any other of Goethe's works. Difficult as the task has en in each instance to convey an adequate idea of the work efore me, and to give expression to the critical opinions I d formed respecting it, that difficulty becomes complicated the present instance by the consciousness of the opposition isting between a certain class of admirers and myself, a class t of ignorant, prejudiced, but of enlightened and ingenious tellects. These admirers speak of the *Second Part of Faust* a work of transcendent merit, surpassing all that Goethe s written, a storehouse of profound and mystic philosophy, miracle of execution. Others again, and these among oethe's most loving students, declare it to be of mediocre terest, very far inferior to the *First Part*, and both in conption and execution an elaborate mistake. And of these am one. I have tried to understand the work; tried to ace myself at the right point of view for perfect enjoyment; it repeated trials, instead of clearing up obscurities and eepening enjoyment, as with the other works, have more d more confirmed my first impressions. Now although it eeds but little experience to suggest that the fault may be nolly mine, "the most legible hand," as Goethe says, "being

illegible in the twilight;" although I might learn from wh I have felt, and from what others have felt about the *Fir Part*, not to be hasty in pronouncing judgment, neverthele I must express my real convictions, and not withhold the on the chance that future enlightenment may cause me alter them. What Channing says of opinions generally, applicable to critical opinions: we are answerable for the *uprightness*, not for their *rightness*.

Moreover, comparing the impressions produced by *Fau* and by the *Second Part*, although it is true that in both cas a sense of disappointment is created, the kind of objectio made to each is entirely different. In *Faust*, a want familiarity with the work may cause it to appear fragmentar discordant, irreverent, not sufficiently metaphysical, and s forth; but a single reading is enough to impress us with sense of its interest, its pathos, its poetry, its strongly-marke character. In other words, the substance of the work la hold of us; it is only the execution upon which criticis exercises itself. If we think it fragmentary, the fragments a at any rate of deep significance. If we think it deficient taste, we never reproach it with want of power. The rever is the case with this *Second Part*. Our objections are n raised by the details, but by the body of the poem; it is n the execution, but the whole conception, both in respect the story itself, and to the mode of working out that stor What is the consequence? The consequence is that familiari with *Faust* removes our objections and intensifies our a miration; but familiarity with the *Second Part* confirms o objections, and discloses their source.

If we remember that all Goethe's works are biographic are parts of his life, and expressions of the various experienc he underwent, and the various stages of culture he pass through, there will be a peculiar interest in examining th product of his old age; and at the same time the reader w see the motive which made me reserve for this chapter wh has to be said on the *Second Part*, instead of affixing it the criticism of the *First Part;* for indeed the two poe are two, not two parts of one poem; the interval betwe them in conception and treatment is as wide as the inter of years between their composition. Taking up the bi graphical clue, we have seen in previous chapters the gradu development of a tendency towards mysticism and over-r flectiveness, which, visible as a germ in his earliest years, gr

h his growth, and expanded in the later years, till its over-
wth shadowed and perplexed his more vigorous concrete
dencies, and made this clearest and most spontaneous of
ets as fond of symbols as a priest of Isis. To those—and
y are many—who think the aim and purpose of Art is to
ate symbols for Philosophy, this development will be prized
true progress. Others who do not thus subordinate the
ist to the thinker, must regard the encroachment of Re-
ction as a sign of decay. It is quite true that Modern Art,
representative of the complexity of Modern Life, demands
arge admixture of Reflection; but the predominance of the
lective tendency is a sign of decay. It is true that for
organism of a certain degree of complexity, an internal
eous structure is necessary; but the increase of ossification
ause and consequent of decay of vital power.

With the two parts of *Faust* we have very much the same
tical questions to debate as with the earlier and later books
Wilhelm Meister; questions too wide and deep for thorough
cussion here, and which I must content myself with in-
cating. One cardinal consideration must, however, be
ought forward, which lies at the very basis of all argument
the subject. It is this: If the artist desire to express
tain philosophic conceptions by means of symbols, he must
ver forget that, Art being Representation, the symbols chosen
ist possess *in themselves* a charm independent of what they
an. The forms which are his materials, the symbols which
his language, must in themselves have a beauty, and an
erest, readily appreciable by those who do not understand
occult meaning. Unless they have this they cease to be
t; they become hieroglyphs. Art is picture-painting, not
ture-writing. Beethoven, in his Symphonies, may have ex-
ssed grand psychological conceptions, which, for the mind
t interprets them, may give an extra charm; but if the
ains in themselves do not possess a magic, if they do not
ng the soul with a keen delight, then let the meaning be
ver so profound, it will pass unheeded, because the *primary
uisite* of music is not that it shall present grand thoughts,
t that it shall agitate the audience with musical emotions.
e poet who has only profound meanings, and not the
chery which is to carry his expression of those meanings
me to our hearts, has failed. The primary requisite of
etry is that it shall move us; not that it shall instruct us.

The *Second Part of Faust*, if the foregoing be correct, is a

failure, because it fails in the primary requisite of a poe
Whatever else it may be, no one will say it is interesting. T
scenes, incidents, and characters do not *in themselves* ca
that overpowering charm which masters us in the First Pa
They borrow their interest from the meanings they are suppos
to symbolise. Only in proportion to your ingenuity in guessi
the riddle is your interest excited by the means. Mephist
formerly so marvellous a creation, has become a mere mout
piece; Faust has lost all traces of individuality, every pul
of emotion. The philosophic critics will point out how th
change is necessary, because in the *Second Part* all that w
individual has become universal. But this is only a descriptio
not a justification; it is dignifying failure with a philosoph
purpose. Goethe has himself declared this to have been h
intention: "I could not help wondering," he says, "that no
of those who undertook a continuation and completion
my fragment should have conceived the idea, which seeme
so obvious, that the Second Part must necessarily be carri
into a more elevated sphere, conducting Faust into high
regions under worthier circumstances." Right enough: but
changing the ground there was no necessity for such a chan
of treatment; to conduct Faust into a higher region it was n
necessary to displace the struggles of an individual by repr
sentative abstractions; above all, it was not necessary to forsa
the real domain of Art for that of Philosophy, and sacrifi
beauty to meaning. The defect of this poem does not lie
its occult meanings, but in the poverty of poetic life, whi
those meanings are made to animate. No matter how occ
the meaning, so that the picture be fine. A lion may be t
symbol of wakefulness, of strength, of kingliness, of solitarine
and of many other things, according to the arbitrary fancy
the artist; and it matters comparatively little whether we right
or wrongly interpret the artist's meaning; but his lion must
finely executed, must excite our admiration *as* a lion, if we a
to consider it a work of Art.

Respecting the philosophic meaning of the *First Part* criti
battle, and will battle perhaps for ever; but they are tolera
unanimous respecting its beauty. The passion, poetry, sarcas
fancy, wisdom, and thrilling thoughts as from some high
world; the pathos and naïveté of Gretchen; the cruel coldne
of Mephisto; the anguish of the restless student; these a
what all understand, and, understanding, enjoy. We may baf
ourselves with the mystery; we all are enchanted with t

ture. We are moved by it as children are moved while ding the *Pilgrim's Progress*, believing all its allegorical rsons and incidents to be real. When the child grows older, d learns to read beneath the allegory a series of grand repre- ntative abstractions, a new enjoyment is added; but even n the enjoyment depends less on the meaning than on the m. In all attempts at allegory which make the meaning ominent, and neglect the form, the effect is cold, lifeless, interesting. Allegory, which has been said to tell the story a mind while seeming to tell the story of a life, is only ceptable on the condition of its story being interesting in elf. The *Second Part of Faust* fails in this first requisite; u must have the key to it. There is no direct appeal to e emotions. There is no intrinsic beauty in the symbols. saying this I speak of it as a whole; in detail there are ny passages of exquisite beauty, some lines of profound ought, and some happy sarcasm; but there is no incident, character, no one scene which lives in the memory like the cidents, characters, and scenes of the *First Part*.

The work opens with Faust on a flowery turf trying to calm s restlessness in sleep. It is twilight, and around him hover lestial spirits. Ariel sings, accompanied by an Æolian harp; e other spirits join in chorus, and Faust, awakened by the n-rise, pours forth his feelings in beautiful verse. This may present the awakening from the dark Night of his soul which s followed on the death of Margaret, and which now vanishes Time, the consoler, brings round the Day, and as the fresh rning air inspires fresh energies.

> Du regst und rührst ein kräftiges Beschliessen
> Zum höchsten Daseyn immerfort zu streben.

he scene changes to the Emperor's court. Things are in a d state. The Lord Chancellor complains that the laws are sregarded; the Generalissimo complains of the army; and e First Lord of the Treasury complains of the empty ex- equer. This is a very amusing scene, full of sarcasm and wisdom. Mephisto appears in the guise of a Court Fool, d the Emperor asks his advice. Gold, says Mephisto, is undant in the earth, and can be brought to light by man's ture and spiritual power. No sooner are these words Nature d Spirit pronounced than the Lord Chancellor, with sensitive thodoxy prescient of heresy, exclaims:

> Natur und Geist—so spricht man nicht zu Christen.
> Desshalb verbrennt man Atheisten.

"Nature and Spirit—words not fit for Christian ears. It for such words we burn Atheists." He adds, that there a but two classes who worthily support the throne:—the clerg and aristocracy: they withstand the storm,—and take Churc and State in payment of their services. The fun of this scen would be more relished if it were visibly woven into the plo but one fails to see any connecting link: the more so a Faust is not even present. The next scene is equally obscur It is a mask got up for the Emperor, and is as wild an variegated as may be. It contains some light happy verse and some satire; but the reader is bewildered. The next scen is the Emperor's pleasure grounds: a satire on Law's schem of paper money is introduced. Mephisto has declared man mind will bring money to light; and this is proved by ma resolving to attach the value of gold to paper. The peopl thus suddenly enriched with cheap wealth, run into the wilde extravagances. Fine material for the commentator here; bu the reader is not greatly elated. In the next scene, Faust h drawn Mephistopheles apart, much to the devil's surprise, wh asks him if there has not been amusement enough for him i the motley throng; but Faust has promised the Emperor t show him Helen of Troy, and calls upon Mephisto to ful that promise. Mephisto says he has no power over the heathe world; and Helen is not so easily brought on the stage a paper money is. But there is nevertheless a way: Faust mu seek The Mothers who dwell in terrible solitudes:

Ins Unbetretene
Nicht zu Betretende.

Faust departs. The scene changes, and again presents th court. Mephisto there removes the freckles from a fair one face, cures another of lameness, gives a philtre to a third. Th lights begin to burn dimly in the hall, and the spectac commences. Faust appears on the stage and calls up Par who is variously criticised by the company; then Helen appea and Mephisto, who sees her for the first time, confesses s is beautiful, but not exactly to his taste. But Faust is uncontrollable rapture, and expresses what may be interpret as the feelings of a German Artist brought into the presen of Grecian Art. He is jealous of Paris, and interferes. Th follows an explosion: the spirits disappear, and Faust is bor off senseless by Mephisto. Thus closes the first act.

If we disregard for a moment the symbolical significance

ese scenes, and the occasional charm of the writing, there l be little to admire; and this consideration is all important, cause even if the symbolism be accepted by us, as it is certain critics, if we marvel at the profound thought and rching sarcasm underlying the phantasmagoria, we are still ly admiring the Philosopher, and have not the Artist before ; we are praising the poem for other than poetic qualities. r must we be surprised if readers, who do not perceive the aning intended to be conveyed, or seeing it, do not highly eem it, are lukewarm in their admiration.

In the second act Faust is discovered lying in bed in his old dy, Mephisto by his side. A servant comes in, from whom learn that Wagner has taken Faust's place, and acquired most as great a reputation. He has long been busied in empts to discover the vital principle, by means of which he l create a man. Our old friend the Student now enters: whom Mephisto instructed years ago. He is an Idealist, d presents an occasion for some quizzing of Fichte's philo- phy. We are then led into Wagner's laboratory. He has t completed his manufacture of an Homunculus, which he eps in a bottle. There is very admirable writing in this ene; especially quaint and characteristic is the language of agner, who, in the pride of science, declares the old methods generation to be idle and frivolous:

> Wie sonst das Zeugen Mode war
> Erklären wir für eitel Possen.

may be all very well for animals, but man with his high ts must have a purer, higher origin.

The Homunculus, however, turns out to be an imp, and a ry irreverent imp, who undertakes to instruct Mephisto, and nducts him and Faust into the Classical Walpurgis Night, ich occupies the rest of the act. This Walpurgis Night, ich is a classical pendant to the Brocken scene in the *First rt*, is a sort of olla podrida. It contains the gathered gments of many years, thrown together without much care, d with infinite obscurity. It is an inexhaustible field for mmentators. A capital touch is that of making Mephisto el quite a stranger among the classical figures, and very morous his disapprobation of the Antique Nude!

> Zwar sind auch wir von Herzen unanständig,
> *Doch das Antike find' ich zu lebendig!*

In the Brocken scene of the *First Part* we had the Germ world of Witchcraft, and the German ideal of female lovelin and simplicity in Gretchen. In this *Second Part* we have t Classical world of Supernaturalism, and the Greek ideal loveliness in Helen. The third act is occupied with *Hele* which was originally published as a separate poem, and w reviewed at some length by Carlyle in the *Foreign Revie* He says of it truly enough that "it by no means carries significance written on its forehead, so that he who runs m read; but on the contrary, it is enveloped in a certain myste under coy disguises, which to hasty readers may be not on offensively obscure, but altogether provoking and impen trable." We should not quarrel with its obscurity, if the opaq forms themselves had transcendent beauty: an alabaster va may give as much delight as a vase of crystal. Carlyle, indee is forced to add that the "outward meaning seems unsati factory enough, were it not that ever and anon we are remind of a cunning, manifold meaning which lies hidden under i and incited by capricious beckonings to evolve this more a more completely from its quaint concealment." The questi at issue here rests entirely on the share to be allotted Meaning in a work of Art. Carlyle refers to Bunyan "nowise our best theologian; neither unhappily is theolo our most attractive science; yet which of our compends a treatises, nay which of our romances and poems, lives in su mild sunshine as the good old *Pilgrim's Progress* in t memory of so many men." But this, if I have not altogeth mistaken the point, is a condemnation; for who can say th the memories of men are fondly occupied with the *Second Pa of Faust* in general, or with *Helena* in particular?

But while I am thus thrown into a position of antagonis both with respect to the work itself and to its eulogists, I m guard against the supposition that I do not admire this *Hele* The style of Art is one which requires for perfect succe qualities absent from the whole *Second Part;* but no lover poetry will fail to recognise the poetry and the charm here a great degree thrown away. To those who love riddl to those who love interpretations, the work is inexhaustibl to those who love beautiful verses, and glimpses of a dee meditative mind, the work is, and always will be, attracti but those who open it expecting a masterpiece will, I thi

[1] Subsequently reprinted in his *Miscellanies*, vol. i.

perpetually disappointed. Some minds will be delighted
h the allegorical Helen embracing Faust, and in the embrace
ving only her veil and vest behind, her body vanishing into
a air—typical of what must ever be the embrace of the
unct Classical with the living Romantic, the resuscitated
t with the actual Present—and in their delight at the
ognition of the meaning, will write chapters of commentary.
the kiss of Gretchen is worth a thousand allegories.

The analysis need not be prolonged, the more so as nothing
rthy of special notice occurs in the two last acts. Faust,
o has viewed many of the aspects of life, is now grown
ous of the encroachments of the sea, and determines to
t it out. He is old, sad, reflective. Four grey old women
Want, Guilt, Misery, and Care—appear to him. On Care
ing him if he has ever know her, he answers: "I have gone
ough the world, seized every enjoyment by the hair—that
ch did not satisfy me I let go, that which ran away from
I would not follow. I have only wished and realised my
h, and wished again, and thus have stormed through life:
t great and mighty; but now I take things wisely and
erly. I know enough of this life, and of the world to
me we have no clear prospect. A fool is he who directs
blinking eyes *that* way, and imagines creatures like himself
ve the clouds! Let him stand firm and look round him
e, the world is not dumb to the man of real sense. What
d is there for him to sweep eternity? All he can know
within his grasp." These concluding words contain
ethe's own philosophy, and I must quote the original:

> Thor! wer dorthin die Augen blinzend richtet
> Sich über Wolken seines Gleichen dichtet!
> Er stehe fest und sehe hier sich um;
> Dem Tüchtigen ist diese Welt nicht stumm.
> Was braucht er in die Ewigkeit zu schweifen!
> Was er erkennt lässt sich ergreifen.

ist refusing to recognise the omnipotence of Care, she
athes on him, and blinds him; but, blind though he be,
resolves that the work he has planned shall be concluded.
marsh," he says, "extends along the mountain's foot,
cting all that is already won: to draw off the noisome pool
uld be a crowning success. I lay open a space for many
lions to dwell upon, not safely it is true, but in free activity.
. Yes, heart and soul am I devoted to this wish; this is
last resolve of wisdom. He only deserves freedom and

life who is daily compelled to conquer them for himself; an thus here, hemmed round by danger, bring childhood, man hood, and old age their well-spent years to a close. I woul fain see such a busy multitude stand upon free soil with fre people. I might then say to the moment, 'Stay, thou art fair The trace of my earthly days cannot perish in centuries. I the presentiment of such exalted bliss, I now enjoy the mos exalted moment." He has thus said to the passing momen "Stay! thou art fair," and with this he expires.

Venit summa dies et ineluctabile fatum,—

the troubled career is closed. And as far as the problem c *Faust* can receive a solution more general than the one in dicated at the close of the criticism on the *First Part*, th solution is I think given in this dying speech; the toiling sou after trying in various directions of *individual* effort and *in dividual* gratification, and finding therein no peace, is finall conducted to the recognition of the vital truth that man live for man, and that only in as far as he is working for Humanit can his efforts bring permanent happiness.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLOSING SCENES

THE spring of 1830 found Goethe in his eighty-first year, bus with *Faust*, writing the preface to Carlyle's *Life of Schille* and deeply interested in the great philosophical contest whic was raging in Paris, between Cuvier and Geoffroy St. Hilair on the question of Unity of Composition in the Anima Kingdom. This question, one of the many important an profound questions which are now agitated in Biology, whic lies indeed at the bottom of almost all speculations on Develop ment, had for very many years been answered by Goethe i the spirit which he recognised in Geoffroy St. Hilaire; and i was to him a matter of keen delight to observe the world c Science earnestly bent on a solution of the question. Th anecdote which M. Soret narrates in the supplemental volum to Eckermann's conversations, is very characteristic.

"Monday, 1st August 1830. The news of the Revolutio of July reached Weimar to-day, and set every one in com

lotion. I went in the course of the afternoon to Goethe. 'Now,' exclaimed he, as I entered, 'what do you think of this reat event? The volcano has come to an eruption; everyhing is in flames.' 'A frightful story,' I answered; 'but what ould be expected otherwise under such notoriously bad circumstances and with such a ministry, than that the whole ould end in the expulsion of the royal family.' 'We do not ppear to understand each other, my good friend,' said Goethe; I am not speaking of those people, but of something quite ifferent. I am speaking of the contest so important for cience between Cuvier and Geoffroy St. Hilaire, which has ome to an open rupture in the Academy.' This expression f Goethe's was so unexpected that I did not know what to ay, and for some minutes was perfectly at a standstill. 'The natter is of the highest importance,' he continued; 'and you an form no conception of what I felt at the intelligence of he *séance* of the 19th July. We have now in Geoffroy a owerful and permanent ally. I see how great must be the nterest of the French scientific world in this affair; because, otwithstanding the terrible political commotion, the *séance* of he 19th July was very fully attended. However, the best of is that the synthetic manner of looking at Nature, introuced by Geoffroy into France, cannot be kept back any onger. From the present time Mind will rule over Matter n the scientific investigations of the French. There will be lances of the great maxims of creation—of the mysterious orkshop of God! Besides, what is all intercourse with Nature, if we merely occupy ourselves with individual material arts, and do not feel the breath of the spirit which prescribes o every part its direction, and orders or sanctions every deviaion by means of an inherent law! I have exerted myself in his great question for fifty years. At first I was alone, then found support, and now at last to my great joy I am surassed by congenial minds.'"

Instead of exclaiming against the coldness of the man who t such a moment could turn from politics to science, let us lance at a somewhat parallel case. Englishmen will be slow n throwing stones at the immortal Harvey; let them hear what Dr. Ent reports. Soon after the most agitating event in English history—the execution of Charles I.—Dr. Ent called on Harvey, and found him seeking solace in anatomical esearches. "Did I not," said the great philosopher, "find balm for my spirit in the memory of my observations of

former years, I should feel little desire for life. But so it h
been that this life of obscurity, this vacation from pub
business, which causes tedium and disgust to so many, h
proved a sovereign remedy to me."

Goethe was not a politician, and he was a biologist. H
view of the superior importance of such an event as the di
cussion between Geoffroy and Cuvier, to the more noisy b
intrinsically less remarkable event, the Revolution of July,
a view which will be accepted by some philosophers, a
rejected by all politicians. Goethe was not content wi
expressing in conversation his sense of the importance
this discussion; he also commenced the writing of his cel
brated review of it, and finished the first part in September.

In November another great affliction smote him: it was th
last he had to bear: the news arrived that his only son, wh
had a little while before gone to Italy in failing health, ha
died in Rome on the 28th of October. The sorrowing fath
strove, as usual, to master all expression of emotion, and
banish it by restless work. But vain was the effort to li
down this climbing sorrow. The trial nearly cost him h
life. A violent hæmorrhage in the lungs was the resu
He was at one time given over; but he rallied again, a
set once more to work, completing the *Autobiography* a
continuing *Faust*.

Ottilie von Goethe, the widow of his son, and his gre
favourite, devoted herself to cheer his solitude. She re
Plutarch aloud to him; and this, with Niebuhr's Rom
History, carried him amid the great pageantries of the pa
where his antique spirit could wander as among friend
Nor was the present disregarded. He read with the eag
ness of youth whatever was produced by remarkable write
such as Béranger, Victor Hugo, Delavigne, Scott, or Carly
He received the homage of Europe; his rooms were constan
brightened by the presence of illustrious visitors, among wh
the English were always welcome.

Rambling over the wild moors, with thoughts oftentimes
wild and dreary as those moors, the young Carlyle, who h
been cheered through his struggling sadness, and strengthen
for the part he was to play in life, by the beauty and t
wisdom which Goethe had revealed to him, suddenly c
ceived the idea that it would be a pleasant and a fitting thi
if some of the few admirers in England forwarded to Weim
a trifling token of their admiration. On reaching home, M

rlyle at once sketched the design of a seal to be engraved: e serpent of eternity encircling a star, with the words *ohne ast ohne Rast* (unhasting, unresting), in allusion to the ll-known verses:

Wie das Gestirn,
Ohne Hast
Aber ohne Rast,
Drehe sich jeder
Um die eigne Last.

Like a star, unhasting, unresting, be each one fulfilling his d-given hest." Fifteen English admirers subscribed to have handsome seal made, on the golden belt of which was graved: *To the German Master: From friends in England: th August* 1831. This letter accompanied it:—

"*To the Poet Goethe, on the 28th August* 1831.

"Sir,—Among the friends whom this so interesting anni-rsary calls round you, may we English friends, in thought d symbolically, since personally it is impossible, present rselves to offer you our affectionate congratulations. We pe you will do us the honour to accept this little Birthday ft, which, as a true testimony of our feelings, may not be thout value.

"We said to ourselves: As it is always the highest duty, and easure, to show reverence where reverence is due, and our ief, perhaps our only benefactor, is he who by act and word tructs us in wisdom; so we, undersigned, feeling towards e Poet Goethe as the spiritually-taught towards their spiritual acher, are desirous to express that sentiment openly and in mmon; for which end we have determined to solicit his ceptance of a small English gift, proceeding from us all ually, on his approaching birthday; so that while the nerable man still dwells among us, some memorial of the titude we owe him, and we think the whole world owes n, may not be wanting.

"And thus our little tribute, perhaps among the purest that en could offer to man, now stands in visible shape, and begs be received. May it be welcome, and speak permanently a most close relation, though wide seas flow between the rties!

"We pray that many years may be added to a life so rious, that all happiness may be yours, and strength given accomplish your high task, even as it has hitherto pro-

ceeded, like a star, without haste yet without rest.—W
remain, Sir, your friends and servants,

"FIFTEEN ENGLISHMEN."[1]

The sentiment expressed in this letter, which every one w
see comes from Carlyle, namely, the reverence felt for t
spiritual teacher by the spiritually-taught, is a manifestatic
that Goethe's teaching had already borne fruit, and that eve
in distant lands men discerned the quality in which his wor
are pre-eminent above those of any modern writer—the quali
of deep and far-reaching insight.

The English tribute was extremely gratifying, because f
England and Englishmen his admiration was very heart
Among the English who lived at Weimar during those da
was a youth whose name is now carried in triumph wherev
English Literature is cherished—I allude to William Mak
peace Thackeray; and Weimar Albums still display wi
pride the caricatures which the young satirist sketched
that period. He has kindly enabled me to enrich the
pages with a brief account of his reminiscences, graceful
sketched in the following letter:—

"LONDON, 28*th April* 1855.

"DEAR LEWES,—I wish I had more to tell you regardi
Weimar and Goethe. Five-and-twenty years ago, at least
score of young English lads used to live at Weimar for stud
or sport, or society; all of which were to be had in the friend
little Saxon capital. The grand-duke and duchess receiv
us with the kindliest hospitality. The court was splendi
but yet most pleasant and homely. We were invited in o
turns to dinners, balls, and assemblies there. Such you
men as had a right, appeared in uniforms, diplomatic a
military. Some, I remember, invented gorgeous clothin
the kind old Hof Marschall of those days, M. de Spie
(who had two of the most lovely daughters eyes ever look
on), being in nowise difficult as to the admission of the
young Englanders. Of the winter nights we used to char
sedan chairs, in which we were carried through the snow
those pleasant court entertainments. I for my part had t

[1] The names of these Englishmen, as far as I have been able to ascerta
are Carlyle and his brother Dr. Carlyle, Walter Scott, Lockhart, Wordswo
Southey, Churchill, Frazer, Professor Wilson, Jerdan, Heraud, Lord Leve
Gower, and Procter (Barry Cornwall).

ood luck to purchase Schiller's sword, which formed a part f my court costume, and still hangs in my study, and puts ie in mind of days of youth the most kindly and delightful.

"We knew the whole society of the little city, and but that ie young ladies, one and all, spoke admirable English, we irely might have learned the very best German. The society iet constantly. The ladies of the court had their evenings. he theatre was open twice or thrice in the week, where we ssembled, a large family party. Goethe had retired from the irection, but the great traditions remained still. The theatre as admirably conducted; and besides the excellent Weimar ompany, famous actors and singers from various parts of ermany performed *Gastrolle*[1] through the winter. In that inter I remember we had Ludwig Devrient in Shylock, Iamlet, Falstaff, and *The Robbers;* and the beautiful chröder in *Fidelio.*

"After three-and-twenty years' absence, I passed a couple f summer days in the well-remembered place, and was rtunate enough to find some of the friends of my youth. Iadame de Goethe was there, and received me and my aughters with the kindness of old days. We drank tea in ie open air at the famous cottage in the Park,[2] which still elongs to the family, and had been so often inhabited by her lustrious father.

"In 1831, though he had retired from the world, Goethe ould nevertheless very kindly receive strangers. His aughter-in-law's tea-table was always spread for us. We assed hours after hours there, and night after night with ie pleasantest talk and music. We read over endless novels nd poems in French, English, and German. My delight in ose days was to make caricatures for children. I was ouched to find that they were remembered, and some even ept until the present time; and very proud to be told, as a d, that the great Goethe had looked at some of them.

"He remained in his private apartments, where only a very w privileged persons were admitted; but he liked to know l that was happening, and interested himself about all rangers. Whenever a countenance struck his fancy, there as an artist settled in Weimar who made a portrait of it. oethe had quite a gallery of heads, in black and white, taken

[1] What in England are called "starring engagements."
[2] The *Gartenhaus.*

by this painter. His house was all over pictures, drawin casts, statues, and medals.

"Of course I remember very well the perturbation of sp with which, as a lad of nineteen, I received the long expec intimation that the Herr Geheimrath would see me on suc morning. This notable audience took place in a little an chamber of his private apartments, covered all round w antique casts and bas-reliefs. He was habited in a long g or drab redingot, with a white neck-cloth and a red ribbon his buttonhole. He kept his hands behind his back, just as Rauch's statuette. His complexion was very bright, clear a rosy. His eyes extraordinarily dark,[1] piercing and brillia I felt quite afraid before them, and recollect comparing th to the eyes of the hero of a certain romance called *Melm the Wanderer*, which used to alarm us boys thirty years ag eyes of an individual who had made a bargain with a Cert Person, and at an extreme old age retained these eyes in their awful splendour. I fancied Goethe must have been s more handsome as an old man than even in the days of youth. His voice was very rich and sweet. He asked questions about myself, which I answered as best I could. recollect I was at first astonished, and then somewhat reliev when I found he spoke French with not a good accent.

"*Vidi tantum*. I saw him but three times. Once walk in the garden of his house in the *Frauenplan;* once going step into his chariot on a sunshiny day, wearing a cap an cloak with a red collar. He was caressing at the tim beautiful little golden-haired granddaughter, over whose sw fair face the earth has long since closed too.

"Any of us who had books or magazines from England s them to him, and he examined them eagerly. *Frazer's Ma zine* had lately come out, and I remember he was interes in those admirable outline portraits which appeared for awl in its pages. But there was one, a very ghastly caricat of Mr. Rogers, which, as Madame de Goethe told me, shut up and put away from him angrily. 'They would m me look like that,' he said; though in truth I can fa nothing more serene, majestic, and *healthy* looking than grand old Goethe.

"Though his sun was setting, the sky round about was c and bright, and that little Weimar illumined by it. In ev

[1] This must have been the effect of the position in which he sat with re to the light. Goethe's eyes were dark brown, but not very dark.

e of those kind salons the talk was still of Art and letters. ıe theatre, though possessing no very extraordinary actors, s still conducted with noble intelligence and order. The tors read books, and were men of letters and gentlemen, lding a not unkindly relationship with the *Adel*. At court e conversation was exceedingly friendly, simple and polished. "The grand-duchess (the present grand-duchess dowager), ady of very remarkable endowments, would kindly borrow r books from us, lend us her own, and graciously talk to us ung men about our literary tastes and pursuits. In the pect paid by this court to the Patriarch of letters, there s something ennobling I think, alike to the subject and vereign. With a five-and-twenty years' experience since ose happy days of which I write, and an acquaintance with immense variety of human kind, I think I have never seen society more simple, charitable, courteous, gentlemanlike ın that of the dear little Saxon city, where the good Schiller d the great Goethe lived and lie buried.—Very sincerely yours,

"W. M. THACKERAY."

Thackeray's testimony is not only borne out by all that I rn elsewhere, but is indeed applicable to Weimar in the esent day, where the English visitor is received by the gning grand-duke and duchess with exquisite grace of rtesy; and where he still feels that the traditions of the ssic period are *living*.

To return to Goethe: His last secretary, Kräuter, who ver speaks of him but with idolatry, describes his activity en at this advanced age as something prodigious. It was reover systematic. A certain time of the day was devoted his correspondence; then came the arrangement of his pers, or the completion of works long commenced. One e spring morning, Kräuter tells me Goethe said to him: Come, we will cease dictation; it is a pity such fine weather uld not be enjoyed, let us go into the Park and do a bit of rk there." Kräuter took the necessary books and papers, d followed his master, who, in his long blue overcoat, a blue on his head, and his hands in the customary attitude hind his back, marched on, upright and imposing. Those o remember Rauch's statuette will picture to themselves e figure of the old man in his ordinary attitude; but perhaps ey cannot fully picture to themselves the imposing effect of at Jupiter-head which, on this occasion, arrested an old

peasant, and so absorbed him, that leaning his hands up his rake, and resting his chin upon his hands, he gazed the spectacle in forgetfulness so complete that he did move out of the way, but stood gazing immovable, wh Kräuter had to step aside to pass.

It is usually said indeed that Goethe showed no signs age; but this is one of the exaggerations which the lax of ordinary speech permits itself. His intellect preserved wonderful clearness and activity, as we know; and indeed man who wrote the essay on Cuvier and Geoffroy's discussi and who completed his *Faust* in his eighty-second year, m fairly claim a place among the Nestors for whom remains

> Some work of noble note,
> Not unbecoming men who strove with gods.

But the biographer is bound to record that in his intelle as in his body, the old man showed unmistakably that he w old. His hearing became noticeably impaired; his mem of recent occurrences was extremely treacherous; yet his e sight remained strong, and his appetite good. In the later ye of his life he presented a striking contrast to the earlier yea in his preference for close rooms. The heated and impu atmosphere of an unventilated room was to him so agreea that it was difficult to persuade him to have a window op for the purpose of ventilation. Always disliking the cold, a longing for warmth like a child of the south, he sat in roo so heated that he was constantly taking cold. This did prevent his enjoyment of the fresh air when he was in country. The mountain air of Ilmenau, especially, seemed give him health and enjoyment. It was to Ilmenau he w to escape from the festivities preparing for his last birthd He ascended the lovely heights of the Gickelhahn, and w into the wood hut where so many happy days had been sp with Karl August. There he saw on the wall those lines had years before written in pencil:—

> Ueber allen Gipfeln
> Ist Ruh,
> In allen Wipfeln
> Spürest du
> Kaum einen Hauch;
> Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
> Warte nur, balde
> Ruhest du auch.

And wiping the tears from his eyes, tears which rose at

emory of Karl August, Charlotte von Stein, and his own ppy youth, he repeated the last line, "*Ja, warte nur, balde hest du auch*—Yes, wait but a little, thou too soon wilt be rest."

That rest was nearer than any one expected. On the 16th March following, his grandson, Wolfgang, coming into his om as usual to breakfast with him, found him still in bed. he day before, in passing from his heated room across the rden, he had taken cold. The physician on arriving, found m very feverish, with what is known in Weimar as the nervous fever," which acts almost like a pestilence. With e aid of remedies, however, he rallied towards evening, and came talkative and jocose. On the 17th he was so much tter that he dictated a long letter to W. von Humboldt. All ought of danger ceased. But during the night of the 19th, aving gone off into a soft sleep, he awoke about midnight ith hands and feet icy cold, and fierce pain and oppression the chest. He would not have the physician disturbed, owever, for he said there was no danger, only pain. But hen the physician came in the morning, he found that a arful change had taken place. His teeth chattered with the old. The pain in his chest made him groan, and sometimes ll out aloud. He could not rest in one place, but tossed out in bed, seeking in vain a more endurable position. His ce was ashen grey; the eyes, deep sunk in the sockets, were ull, and the glance was that of one conscious of the presence death. After a time these fearful symptoms were allayed, nd he was removed from his bed into the easy chair, which ood at his bedside. There, towards evening, he was once ore restored to perfect calmness, and spoke with clearness nd interest of ordinary matters; especially pleased he was to ear that his appeal for a young artist, a protégé, had been ccessful; and with a trembling hand, he signed an official aper which secured a pension to another artist, a young Veimar lady, for whom he had interested himself.

On the following day, the approach of death was evident. he painful symptoms were gone. But his senses began to il him, and he had moments of unconsciousness. He sat uiet in the chair, spoke kindly to those around him, and ade his servant bring Salvandy's *Seize Mois, ou la Révolution les Révolutionnaires*, which he had been reading when he ll ill; but after turning over the leaves, he laid it down, eling himself too ill to read. He bade them bring him the

list of all the persons who had called to inquire after
health, and remarked that such evidence of sympathy m
not be forgotten when he recovered. He sent every one
bed that night, except his copyist. He would not even all
his old servant to sit up with him, but insisted on his lyi
down to get the rest so much needed.

The following morning—it was the 22nd March 1832—
tried to walk a little up and down the room, but, after a tu
he found himself too feeble to continue. Reseating hims
in the easy chair, he chatted cheerfully with Ottilie on t
approaching Spring, which would be sure to restore him.
had no idea of his end being so near.

The name of Ottilie was frequently on his lips. She s
beside him, holding his hand in both of hers. It was n
observed that his thoughts began to wander incoherent
"See," he exclaimed, "the lovely woman's head—with bla
curls—in splendid colours—a dark background!" Present
he saw a piece of paper on the floor, and asked them h
they could leave Schiller's letters so carelessly lying abo
Then he slept softly, and on awakening, asked for the sketch
he had just seen. These were the sketches seen in a drea
In silent anguish the close now so surely approaching w
awaited. His speech was becoming less and less distin
The last words audible were: *More light!* The final darkne
grew apace, and he whose eternal longings had been for mo
Light, gave a parting cry for it, as he was passing under t
shadow of death.

He continued to express himself by signs, drawing lette
with his forefinger in the air, while he had strength, a
finally, as life ebbed, drawing figures slowly on the sha
which covered his legs. At half-past twelve he compos
himself in the corner of the chair. The watcher placed
finger on her lip to intimate that he was asleep. If sle
it was, it was a sleep in which a great life glided from t
world.

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By ERNEST RHYS

VICTOR HUGO said a Library was "an act of faith," and some unknown essayist spoke of one so beautiful, so perfect, so harmonious in all its parts, that he who made it was smitten with a passion. In that faith the promoters of Everyman's Library planned it out originally on a large scale; and their idea in so doing was to make it conform as far as possible to a perfect scheme. However, perfection is a thing to be aimed at and not to be achieved in this difficult world; and since the first volumes appeared, now several years ago, there have been many interruptions. A great war has come and gone; and even the City of Books has felt something like a world commotion. Only in recent years is the series getting back into its old stride and looking forward to complete its original scheme of a Thousand Volumes. One of the practical expedients in that original plan was to divide the volumes into sections, as Biography, Fiction, History, Belles Lettres, Poetry, Romance, and so forth; with a compartment for young people, and last, and not least, one of Reference Books. Beside the dictionaries and encyclopædias to be expected in that section, there was a special set of literary and historical atlases. One of these atlases dealing with Europe, we may recall, was directly affected by the disturbance of frontiers during the war; and the maps had to be completely revised in consequence, so as to chart

the New Europe which we hope will now preserve its peace under the auspices of the League of Nations set up at Geneva.

That is only one small item, however, in a library list which runs already to the final centuries of the Thousand. The largest slice of this huge provision is, as a matter of course, given to the tyrannous demands of fiction. But in carrying out the scheme, publishers and editors contrived to keep in mind that books, like men and women, have their elective affinities. The present volume, for instance, will be found to have its companion books, both in the same section and even more significantly in other sections. With that idea too, novels like Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *Fortunes of Nigel*, Lytton's *Harold* and Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*, have been used as pioneers of history and treated as a sort of holiday history books. For in our day history is tending to grow more documentary and less literary; and "the historian who is a stylist," as one of our contributors, the late Thomas Seccombe, said, "will soon be regarded as a kind of Phœnix." But in this special department of Everyman's Library we have been eclectic enough to choose our history men from every school in turn. We have Grote, Gibbon, Finlay, Macaulay, Motley, Prescott. We have among earlier books the Venerable Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, have completed a Livy in an admirable new translation by Canon Roberts, while Cæsar, Tacitus, Thucydides and Herodotus are not forgotten.

"You only, O Books," said Richard de Bury, "are liberal and independent; you give to all who ask." The delightful variety, the wisdom and the wit which are at the disposal of Everyman in his own library may well, at times, seem to him a little embarrassing. He may turn to Dick Steele in *The Spectator* and learn how Cleomira dances, when the elegance of her motion is unimaginable and "her eyes are chastised with the simplicity and innocence of her thoughts." He may turn to Plato's Phædrus

and read how every soul is divided into three parts (like Cæsar's Gaul). He may turn to the finest critic of Victorian times, Matthew Arnold, and find in his essay on Maurice de Guerin the perfect key to what is there called the "magical power of poetry." It is Shakespeare, with his

"daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty;"

it is Wordsworth, with his

"voice . . . heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides;"

or Keats, with his

". . . . moving waters at their priest-like task
Of cold ablution round Earth's human shores."

William Hazlitt's "Table Talk," among the volumes of Essays, may help to show the relationship of one author to another, which is another form of the Friendship of Books. His incomparable essay in that volume, "On Going a Journey," forms a capital prelude to Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria" and to his and Wordsworth's poems. In the same way one may turn to the review of Moore's Life of Byron in Macaulay's *Essays* as a prelude to the three volumes of Byron's own poems, remembering that the poet whom Europe loved more than England did was as Macaulay said: "the beginning, the middle and the end of all his own poetry." This brings us to the provoking reflection that it is the obvious authors and the books most easy to reprint which have been the signal successes out of the many hundreds in the series, for Everyman is distinctly proverbial in his tastes. He likes best of all an old author who has worn well or

a comparatively new author who has gained something like news-paper notoriety. In attempting to lead him on from the good books that are known to those that are less known, the publishers may have at times been too adventurous. The late *Chief* himself was much more than an ordinary book-producer in this critical enterprise. He threw himself into it with the zeal of a book-lover and indeed of one who, like Milton, thought that books might be as alive and productive as dragons' teeth, which being "sown up and down the land, might chance to spring up armed men."

Mr. Pepys in his *Diary* writes about some of his books, "which are come home gilt on the backs, very handsome to the eye." The pleasure he took in them is that which Everyman may take in the gilt backs of his favourite books in his own Library, which after all he has helped to make good and lasting.

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